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REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Analytical report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, by its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, set in train a process of restructuring and reform aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization in dealing with political, economic and social issues, on the basis of the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations 1/ and the related findings of the Fifth Committee (A/41/795). At that time the Secretary-General expressed his conviction that the report of the Group of Experts provided a basis for a process of change that could bring about the improvements in the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization needed for its long-term viability and on which Member States could come together, in accordance with their obligations under the Charter, to restore a sound and lasting financial foundation for the Organization (see A/41/663, paras. 2 and 11).

2. As requested by the General Assembly in subsequent resolutions, the Secretary-General submitted two progress reports and a final report on the implementation of resolution 41/213 (A/42/234 and Corr.1, A/43/286 and Corr.1, and A/44/222 and Corr.1). The present report must thus be seen as a supplement to those reports. In addition, separate reports were submitted to the Assembly at its forty-second, forty-third and forty-fourth sessions on various questions relating to section II of resolution 41/213 concerning the planning, programming and budgetary process. By its resolutions 42/211 of 21 December 1987, 43/213 of 21 December 1988 and 44/200 A to C of 21 December 1989, the Assembly provided further guidance to Member States and the Secretary-General. Throughout, the Assembly emphasized that it was essential that the present financial difficulties be dispelled in order to carry out successfully the process of reform. It also stressed that the implementation of resolution 41/213 should not have a negative impact on mandated programmes and activities.

3. For his part, the Secretary-General stated in his first progress report (A/42/234 and Corr.1) that the process of renewal and reform must recapture the sense and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations in a world that is changing with a rapidity unprecedented in history, where one of the few constants is the ever-closer interweaving of the destinies of all countries and all peoples. He indicated a number of common points of reference that should be established as foundations for the future. At the end of the period under review, he believes that they remain valid. While not repeating them in full, he wishes to reaffirm them in order to place in its proper and full context the detailed information on specific recommendations which follows. In order to pursue the goal of reform in a manner that will increasingly witness the realization of the goals and objectives of the Charter, a genuine commitment to the revitalization of the Organization must be shared by all its Members; there must be an end to the present financial uncertainties; the responsibility of the Secretary-General as Chief Administrative Officer of the Secretariat must not be eroded; renewal and reform must be a continuing and dynamic process following an orderly approach; and both Member States and the Secretariat must accept the practical consequences of the drive for

rationalization and streamlining, namely, an unprecedented degree of restraint and a willingness to set aside national, sectoral or purely bureaucratic interests.

4. In its resolution 43/213, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to present to it at its forty-fourth session his final report on the implementation of resolution 41/213 and to submit to it at its forty-fifth session an analytical report assessing the effect of implementation on the Organization and its activities as a whole and the way in which it had enhanced its administrative and financial functioning.

5. In his final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General presented a factual review of all actions taken within his purview since 1 January 1987 to implement resolution 41/213, as well as actions taken by the General Assembly, the International Civil Service Commission, the Joint Inspection Unit and the Board of Auditors.

6. In its resolution 44/200 A, the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General and Member States to intensify their efforts with respect to the implementation of the provisions of resolution 41/213 that fell within their respective purviews and renewed its request to the Secretary-General to submit an analytical report to it at its forty-fifth session. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to provide information in the following areas: an exhaustive presentation of the state of implementation of each recommendation; an explanation with regard to such implementation and an assessment of its impact on programmes, giving particular emphasis to those programmes which have been terminated or completed; and a general critical assessment of the implementation of resolution 41/213 in the light of the objectives of that resolution. The Assembly also noted that the Secretary-General's final report was unable to cover the entire three-year period, as it was submitted to the Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) in April 1989, and requested the Secretary-General to include in the analytical report any further action taken to the end of 1989.

7. In response to those requests, the present report provides detailed information concerning implementation of each recommendation of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts through 31 December 1989 accompanied, where appropriate, by an explanation with regard to such implementation and an assessment of its impact on the relevant programmes. Detailed information concerning terminated, completed and postponed programme outputs appears in the report of the Secretary-General on programme performance for the biennium 1988-1989 (A/45/218 and Add.1). The present report also contains an overall assessment of the implementation of Assembly resolution 41/213 in the light of its objectives.

8. It is evident that the programme of administrative reforms initiated in 1986 has been largely implemented. The process of implementation has taken place - of necessity - during a period of continuing financial crisis and of additional major new responsibilities being entrusted to the Organization. The process has been an interactive one both in relation to the continuing dialogue between the Secretary-General and Member States since 1986 and in the context of the rapidly changing global situation. When the General Assembly adopted its resolution 41/213 in 1986, no one could have foreseen the events that have occurred since then and

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that have led, for instance, to the setting up of 4 new peace-keeping operations in 1988-1989, as against 13 over the previous 40 years, and the planning of several others. Similarly unexpected are the momentous developments in Eastern Europe and the new global concern emerging on environment and development and on drugs. As the Secretary-General has said in his report on the work of the Organization in 1989, 2/ obstacles to stability, peace and balanced progress are many and the world's political, intellectual and moral imagination will need to be fully employed in overcoming them. Administrative reform is essentially a continuing process to aid in these efforts, but political and financial support is inevitably the key to capacity and performance.

II. THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY AND ITS FUNCTIONING

A. Specific recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts

9. Implementation of those recommendations relating to the need for more effective use of the intergovernmental machinery rests primarily with Member States. The Secretariat has played a supportive role, with a view to providing conference services world wide in as co-ordinated and cost-effective a manner possible.

Recommendation 1

10. The Committee on Conferences was strengthened and given broader responsibilities pursuant to resolution 43/222 B of 21 December 1988, in which the General Assembly decided to retain the Committee as a permanent subsidiary organ composed of 21 members with revised terms of reference covering the entire range of responsibilities recommended by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts.

11. The calendar of conferences for the biennium 1990-1991, 3/ as submitted by the Committee on Conferences to and approved by the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/196 A of 21 December 1989, was designed to ensure the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources by the scheduling of conferences and meetings throughout the year to eliminate "peaks and valleys" in the meetings programme, avoiding overlapping meetings related to the same sector of activity, and ensuring that requests for conference services correspond accurately to requirements. To this end the Department of Conference Services held extensive consultations with substantive secretariats.

12. In fulfilment of its mandate to monitor the Organization's policy on publications, the Committee at its 1989 session considered the results of reviews conducted by a number of intergovernmental bodies of their recurrent publications programme. 4/ At its 1990 session, the Committee will undertake a further review of the recurrent publications programme, the level of resources devoted to the production thereof and the impact of such publishing activities on the overall programme of conference and documentation services.

13. At its 1989 session, the Committee on Conferences also discussed the distribution of conference activity among the various headquarters locations and requested updated information on available conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations. With respect to its mandate "to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the General Assembly on means to ensure an improved co-ordination of conferences within the United Nations system, including conference services and facilities, and to conduct the appropriate consultations in that regard" (Assembly resolution 43/222 B, para. 4 (f), the Committee entrusted its secretariat with the task of examining the current status of co-ordination, identifying problems and suggesting possible solutions with a view to making the necessary improvements. 5/ The Committee is expected to consider those issues further at its 1990 session.

Recommendation 2

14. The Secretary-General brought recommendation 2 (a), that the Economic and Social Council should hold only one session per year, to the attention of the Council (see E/1987/2). In its decision 1987/112 of 6 February 1987, the Council established a Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields to carry out the study called for in recommendation 8 (see paras. 38-42 below) and requested it to consider the relevant provisions of recommendation 2 in that context. The Special Commission submitted its report (E/1988/75) to the Council at its second regular session of 1988 without having reached agreement. At that session, the Council adopted resolution 1988/77 of 29 July 1988, in paragraph 3 of which it requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council at its second regular session of 1989 "on the feasibility and comparative costs of holding at the United Nations, with the present in-sessional arrangements, one consolidated or two regular sessions of the Council". The Secretary-General provided the requested information to the Council at its second regular session for 1989 in a report entitled "Revitalization of the Economic and Social Council" (E/1989/95). While the Council adopted resolution 1989/114, entitled "Further measures for the implementation of Council resolution 1988/77 on the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council" on 28 July 1989, it took no further action on the question of holding one session a year. In this connection, attention is drawn to Council decision 1990/205, adopted at its organizational session for 1990, in which the Council decided to review its current sessional arrangements in the context of its consideration of major policy themes at high-level special meetings.

15. Recommendations 2 (b) and (c) have been partially implemented. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1988/77, decided, inter alia, that it should further continue to consider the biennialization of the sessions of its subsidiary bodies and items on its own agenda and programme of work, taking into account the need for a balance between economic and social issues. Recommendation 2 (b) was brought to the attention of subsidiary bodies in the context of the in-depth study of the intergovernmental structures in the economic and social fields.

16. As was the case for the 1989 calendar of conferences and meetings, the calendar approved by the General Assembly for the biennium 1990-1991 is not

markedly different from that approved for prior bienniums in terms of the number of meetings scheduled. While only a few bodies have decided to schedule sessions biennially instead of annually or have significantly reduced the duration of their sessions since 1986, some progress has been made during the period under review.

17. By its resolution 158 (XIV) of 5 April 1987, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) decided to amend its rules of procedure to the effect that sessions of the Commission should normally be held every other year. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also meets on a biennial basis. By its resolution 618 (XXII), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) decided that sectoral conferences of ministers and their technical, subsidiary bodies should meet on a biennial basis, with conferences limited to a duration of no more than six days with short and well-focused agendas and work programmes. The biennialization of sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development was introduced in 1987 and, after review, was reconfirmed in 1989. 6/ The biennialization is intended to allow more time for preparation by the Secretariat of substantive themes in accordance with the decision of the Intergovernmental Committee at its tenth session in 1989.

18. On the other hand, however, a recommendation by the Commission on the Status of Women to change its cycle of meetings from biennial to annual was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and the Commission has been meeting annually since its thirty-second session in 1988 as it considers that annual meetings best serve its functions of monitoring the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 7/ and the system-wide medium-term plan on women and development.

19. The Committee on Conferences has discussed the utilization of conference services by a wide range of United Nations bodies, on the basis of reports prepared by the Secretariat, and has expanded the statistical coverage of utilization data. The average utilization factor for United Nations bodies has shown improvement and has reached a level of over 70 per cent. In response to indications that time spent in informal consultations was not duly reflected in the statistical information studied, the Committee has agreed on a refined methodology to be put into effect, which would include information on the holding of informal meetings, together with information on time lost owing to late starting or early ending of meetings.

20. As recommended by the Committee on Conferences, the Assembly, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 42/207 B of 11 December 1987, requested United Nations organs to indicate with greater precision the actual number of meetings with conference services that they would require in their coming sessions; in paragraph 5 of resolution 43/222 A, it urged those United Nations organs which had failed to make adequate use of the conference-servicing resources provided to them to consider reducing the number of meetings they requested in future; and, in paragraph 5 of resolution 44/196 A, it urged all United Nations organs to intensify their efforts to improve their utilization of conference-servicing resources. In paragraph 4 of the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Committee on Conferences to review the methodology on conference-servicing utilization rates in order to provide, if possible, a more accurate assessment of the overall use of conference

resources with a view to enabling United Nations bodies to make the optimum use of conference services and to facilitate, where necessary, continued rationalization of their meeting requirements.

21. The Department of Conference Services, in close co-operation with the Committee on Conferences, is currently analysing past utilization patterns by United Nations bodies in order to suggest practical ways in which the conference-servicing resources placed at their disposal can be applied more effectively and used in the most cost-efficient manner.

Recommendation 3

22. As recognized by the Group of Experts, the responsibility for implementation of this recommendation rests with the presiding officers of the principal organs and with the representatives of Member States. The Secretary-General has been making every effort to assist Member States to achieve a more effective use of available conference-servicing facilities.

23. In his annual memorandum on the organization of the work of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General has recommended to the General Committee that related items be merged or phased in intervals, that agenda items be distributed among Main Committees so as to ensure the best possible use of the expertise and that no new subsidiary organ be created without discontinuing existing ones. The President of the General Assembly has continued to urge Member States to observe the need for the timely commencement of meetings, to reduce the number of resolutions and to exercise restraint in requesting reports of the Secretary-General.

24. With respect to the scheduling of plenary meetings, efforts to reduce their overall number and to avoid night and weekend meetings have met with some success. The total number of plenary meetings decreased from 103 at the forty-first session to 88 8/ at the forty-fourth session, while the number of meetings continuing into the evening decreased from 61 at the forty-first session to 27 at the forty-fourth session. This has been achieved partially through the scheduling of meetings only upon confirmation that the Assembly was ready to take action on the item to be discussed and through improved co-ordination between the secretariats of the General Assembly and its Main Committees. With particular emphasis on the need to reduce costs and enhance efficiency, it is encouraging to note that the number of meetings entailing additional costs has been cut significantly. Over the same period, however, the Second, Third and Fifth Committees have increased the number of meetings held.

25. With respect to biennialization of work programmes, the Second and Sixth Committees have well-established biennial programmes of work. Further attempts could be made to encourage all Main Committees to adopt a biennial programme. Although this would not significantly affect the number of meetings of each Committee, there would be a positive impact on the documentation to be submitted and the resolutions emanating therefrom.

26. Efforts are continuing to ensure that meetings of the Fourth Committee and the Special Political Committee are held in sequential order with concurrent meetings being avoided as far as possible. While 8 of the 15 meetings held by the Fourth Committee during the forty-third session overlapped with those of the Special Political Committee, only 4 of the 17 meetings of the Fourth Committee were held concurrently with the Special Political Committee during the forty-fourth session.

27. With respect to the agenda of the General Assembly, however, the number of agenda items has risen from 146 at the forty-first session of the Assembly to 161 at the forty-fourth session. The number of resolutions adopted has increased, yearly, from 311 at the forty-first session to 331 at the forty-fourth session (as at December 1989).

28. It is clear that the streamlining of procedures and careful planning can lead to savings in costs and enhanced efficiency. Co-operation of the respective Presiding Officers, a growing recognition by Member States of the need to conserve resources and improved scheduling by the Secretariat have contributed to the partial implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

29. The principle that United Nations bodies meet at their respective headquarters is being applied. In his report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, paras. 20-22), the Secretary-General provided information on those bodies authorized to meet away from their established headquarters in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985, as well as other bodies which sometimes meet away from their established headquarters as part of the implementation of their work programmes. These meetings are included in the official calendar of conferences and meetings and are approved by the General Assembly when it adopts the calendar.

30. Furthermore, in accordance with established procedure, the Committee on Conferences meets during sessions of the Assembly to discuss and make recommendations, as appropriate, on the granting of departures from the rules and regulations governing conference planning, particularly as contained in resolution 40/243, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the established headquarters principle and exceptions to it.

31. As reported in the Secretary-General's final report (ibid., para. 23), guidelines for preparing Host Country Agreements were issued in May 1987, in the form of an administrative instruction (ST/AI/342). In accordance with this instruction, the Department of Conference Services is responsible for ensuring that the conference-servicing staff assigned to the meeting or conference conforms to the standards approved by the General Assembly; that the conditions of employment of short-term conference staff conform to those agreed upon by all member organizations and the International Association for Conference Interpreters (AIIC) and Translators (AITC); and that they are reflected in the host Government agreement. The Department of Conference Services also determines the suitability of conference staff provided by the host Government. Those guidelines were established in order to ensure that costs to be borne by host Governments were

determined in a consistent manner and properly accounted for and that all additional costs directly or indirectly involved when meetings are held away from their established headquarters, upon the invitation of a Government, would be defrayed by that Government and not accrue to the Organization.

Recommendation 5

32. The recommendation that construction of conference facilities should only be undertaken when sufficient resources are available has been implemented. In its resolution 41/213, the General Assembly stated that the implementation of that recommendation should not prejudice the implementation of projects and programmes it had already approved. The two projects approved were the construction of conference facilities at Addis Ababa for ECA and at Bangkok for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). These two construction projects are under way and a progress report will be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

33. The impact of the moratorium on construction of conference facilities has highlighted the need to renovate and modernize existing facilities for the Organization to meet the increasing requirements. This includes the upgrading and improvement of the mechanical and electrical systems and equipment, and the repair and refurbishing of the buildings' exteriors.

34. Owing to the advanced age of the structures and fabric of most of the older buildings world wide and the spotty major maintenance programme due to the financial crisis, certain facilities have fallen into disrepair. A major maintenance programme is required to prevent further deterioration of the physical plant, bring electrical and mechanical systems to optimum performance levels and introduce modern systems for conserving energy while adapting existing facilities as the Organization's needs change.

Recommendation 6

35. The recommendation was approved by the General Assembly in the context of the 1988-1989 programme budget and was implemented with effect from 1 January 1988. As a result, the claims for delegation travel decreased in the following manner. At the fortieth session of the Assembly, when each Member State was entitled to one first class and four economy class tickets, the total number of claims submitted was 588. At the forty-first session, owing to the 1986 economy measures, all Member States were entitled to one first class and two economy class tickets and 297 claims were submitted. Following the implementation of recommendation 6, which limited the entitlement to one first class and four economy class tickets for those Member States designated least developed countries, the number of claims at the forty-third session was only 126, without apparent decrease in attendance.

Recommendation 7

36. This recommendation has been partially implemented. This question was discussed by the Committee on Conferences in 1987 and 1988 and is on its agenda for review in 1990. Pursuant to its recommendation, the General Assembly in resolution 43/222 C renewed its appeal to Member States to exercise restraint in their requests for the circulation of communications as United Nations documents and to endeavour to keep the length of communications to a minimum. It further requested the Committee on Conferences to keep the matter under review and report to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

37. There was a reduction in the number of communications from Member States between 1988 and 1989 with 1,070 being received in 1988 and 742 in 1989 with a consequent decrease of 800 pages. It has proved difficult, however, to implement the recommendation further. Little progress has been made in limiting the length of communications. There may be merit in considering the development of guidelines concerning communications from Member States, including the distinction between communications to be translated in their entirety into all official languages and those communications or parts thereof that may be issued in the language or languages of submission only, and a reconsideration of the timing permitted between submission and issuance of non-urgent communications to avoid undue pressure on translation and printing services. The practice of issuance of communications as joint documents of the Assembly and the Security Council or of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must be continued, and, to the extent possible, expanded. A reduction in the submission of communications from Member States for processing and distribution as official records will result in an overall decrease in the cost of processing documents. Co-operation from Member States in curtailing their requests, in accordance with this recommendation, is essential for further improvements in this area.

B. Comparative study of the intergovernmental machinery and its functioning

Recommendation 8

38. The careful and in-depth study of the intergovernmental structure in the economic and social fields to be undertaken by an intergovernmental body to be designated by the General Assembly, which was called for in this recommendation, was assigned to the Special Commission established by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1987/112 (see para. 14 above). The Special Commission held nine sessions between March 1987 and May 1988. It was unable to reconcile the divergent views on a number of major questions and submitted its report (E/1989/75) to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session in 1988 without any specific recommendations (see Council resolution 1988/77).

39. The Council, in that resolution, noted that there were no agreed conclusions on recommendation 8 and decided to transmit the report of the Special Commission to the General Assembly at its forty-third session. In its resolution 43/174, the Assembly, taking note of the in-depth study carried out by the Special Commission

and recognizing that the Commission had been unable to reach agreed recommendations, requested the Secretary-General to consult with all Member States and seek their views on ways and means of achieving a balanced and effective implementation of recommendations 2 and 8 and to submit a detailed report to it at its forty-fourth session.

40. In the light of the report of the Secretary-General (A/44/747), the General Assembly, at its forty-fourth session, adopted resolution 44/103 of 11 December 1989, in which it decided to review the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, including the secretariat support structure, at its forty-fifth session, taking into account major international conferences scheduled to take place in the beginning of the 1990s. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to present a report to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the follow-up and implementation of its resolution 44/103.

41. It may be noted that the Economic and Social Council decided to address separately the question of its revitalization and, in this context, adopted resolution 1988/77 containing a set of interrelated measures to enhance its effectiveness and improve its working methods. Further measures to this end were embodied in its resolution 1989/114 and decision 1990/205. The Council will address the question of implementation of its resolutions on revitalization at its second regular session in 1990.

42. Within the framework of recommendation 8, a number of bodies of the Organization took action to streamline their structures. In the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Trade and Development Board reviewed the methods of work and structure of its intergovernmental machinery. Agendas were streamlined, the calendar of meetings was improved and three subsidiary bodies were abolished. In parallel, the secretariat of UNCTAD was reorganized. A comprehensive review of its functioning made by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) during a special session in 1987 led to a rationalization of its structure and methods of work, which resulted in a significant reduction in documentation and in the number of meetings. The Committee of the Whole of ECLAC made a careful study of its intergovernmental structure and recommended that the current institutional structure of ECLAC and its system be maintained, but decided to abolish two sessional committees with a view to rationalizing its mechanisms, procedures and meetings (resolution 489 of 14 August 1987). During its annual session in 1987, ECA also undertook a review of its intergovernmental machinery, taking a number of decisions with regard to the structure of the machinery, the periodicity and duration of meetings, agendas and programmes of work (resolution 618 (XXII)). These decisions have now been implemented and have led to a more coherent and integrated structure and improved functioning within the framework of the terms of reference of the Commission and the needs of member States. The ongoing review and evaluation of the Commission's Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs), the outcome of which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, represent another step towards the further rationalization of structures.

C. Co-ordination

Recommendation 9

43. In response to this recommendation and as part of its ongoing work, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) has reviewed the functioning of its subsidiary machinery during the period from 1986 to 1989. Practical measures adopted by ACC as a result of this review include the strengthening of the managerial role of the Organizational Committee of ACC and the rationalization of the meetings of the subsidiary machinery of ACC. The number of meetings held under the auspices of ACC was reduced from 34 in 1986 to 22 in 1989. At the same time, a number of steps were taken to focus the discussion of ACC on selected major issues on the basis of background papers prepared by relevant organizations.

44. Provision has been made for more active participation by the regional commissions in the work of ACC and its subsidiary bodies. The Co-ordinator of the Executive Secretaries attends the meetings of ACC and standing arrangements exist for attendance at meetings of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions as appropriate.

45. In reviewing progress made in the implementation of this recommendation, CPC emphasized in 1987 the need for more effective co-ordination at the inter-secretariat level and stressed the important role of ACC in this regard. The Committee also noted that the machinery remained complex and recommended that ACC should intensify the review of its functioning with a view to improving the form and substance of its communications, streamlining its subsidiary machinery and reducing its cost substantially. 9/ In 1989, CPC stressed the need to strengthen co-ordination in general through the improvement of co-ordination instruments and machinery with the United Nations system and in the United Nations itself. The Committee emphasized the need for greater co-ordination both in the policy-making process and in programmatic activities. With respect to the policy-making process, there was a perceived need to enhance the common response of the organizations of the United Nations system to emerging issues of importance to the international community and for an improved exchange of information and views between ACC and Member States. 10/

46. The General Assembly, in its resolution 44/194 of 21 December 1989, requested ACC to modify substantially the format and content of its annual overview report in accordance with the relevant conclusions and recommendations of CPC. In the same resolution, the Assembly invited the Economic and Social Council and CPC to improve their consideration of the annual overview report of ACC, in accordance with their respective mandates. The Secretary-General was requested to present the annual overview report of the ACC to CPC at its thirtieth session, to the Council and to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session, together with the relevant conclusions and recommendations of these bodies on that report in accordance with existing practice.

47. The question of the functioning of the subsidiary machinery will again be considered by ACC in the review of its own role in 1990. In so doing, ACC will take into account the main thrust of its work in the future, particularly requests that have been put to it by relevant intergovernmental bodies, in particular, the Council in its resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114 and the Assembly in its resolution 44/194.

Recommendation 10

48. As reported previously, ACC welcomed the thrust of this recommendation, which underlines the need for discussion by executive heads of the organizations concerned of major policy questions in the economic and social fields. The Committee was of the view that such discussion was already being undertaken in its regular biannual sessions and that the objective of the recommendation could be achieved by convening subject-oriented Committee sessions and/or recourse to functional groups. The Secretary-General believes that the objective of this recommendation can best be achieved through informal consultations among various executive heads on major policy questions. To that end, the Secretary-General has in the past few years convened a number of informal meetings with relevant executive heads to consider specific issues. As and when required, the Secretary-General intends to continue resorting to such informal consultations to address selected major issues in the economic and social fields in the future, taking into account the emphasis placed by the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC on the leading role of the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, in the co-ordination of the activities of the system.

Recommendation 11

49. Implementation of this recommendation, which seeks to strengthen the co-ordination of operational activities at the national level, through reaffirmation of the central co-ordinating role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), clarification of the authority of the resident co-ordinator, and confirmation of that authority with respect to non-UNDP programmes, is continuing.

50. In its resolution 42/196 of 11 December 1987, the General Assembly reaffirmed the central funding and co-ordinating role of UNDP and recommended to intergovernmental bodies that they take fully into account the need to preserve this role in considering new funding arrangements for technical co-operation. It also requested the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to provide at its forty-fifth session an analysis of the issues relating to the implementation of the central funding concept. The Director-General submitted the requested assessment as a technical paper annexed to his 1989 report on operational activities for development (A/44/324).

51. In its decision 89/20, the UNDP Governing Council noted that the full potential of the role of UNDP as the central funding mechanism for the United Nations system of technical co-operation had not yet been realized, and requested the Administrator to propose to the Council "elements for a funding strategy" based on the Director-General's report. The Governing Council will consider this proposed strategy at its thirty-seventh session in June 1990.

52. The question of successor arrangements for UNDP-agency support costs also bears on programme co-ordination and coherence in operational activities. It is the subject of another expert study to be considered at the June 1990 session of the UNDP Governing Council.

53. In its resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989, the General Assembly stressed the value of the concept of central funding of technical co-operation through UNDP and urged all Governments to channel the maximum possible share of resources available for multilateral technical co-operation through UNDP. The Assembly further emphasized "the primary importance attached to funding through core resources in operational activities" and at the same time recognized "the value of special-purpose grant resources, provided they are designed as a means to ensure additional resource flows and their projects are coherently and effectively integrated in the programmes of the United Nations system" (resolution 44/211, para. 11).

54. In its resolution 42/196, the Assembly also requested the Director-General, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP, to assess the constraints on the use of the UNDP country programme and programming process as a frame of reference for non-UNDP technical co-operation activities. The Assembly requested several other closely related studies and reports by the Director-General. The Director-General submitted the assessment regarding the "frame of reference" as a further technical paper with his 1989 policy review report and, in that report itself, provided comprehensive analyses of the country-level co-ordination question, with recommendations for synchronization of United Nations system allocation and programming cycles, cross-programming analyses and harmonization of procedures. The country-level programme co-ordination question was also addressed in depth in a report he commissioned by senior consultants who carried out integrated country reviews in 1989 and made extensive recommendations (A/44/324/Add.2).

55. Bearing in mind the Director-General's reports, the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/211, adopted a comprehensive programme of action with a view to more integrated and co-ordinated programming of United Nations system co-operation based on an overall national programme framework for such co-operation. It requested the Director-General, inter alia, to conduct an independent study aimed at developing ways to improve the United Nations system's co-ordination at the country level, including the concept of a document containing the integrated operational response of the system to the national framework for co-operation. This study should include an analysis of the impact of such an approach on the roles of both the resident co-ordinator and the leadership of UNDP. The Director-General will submit this study to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in 1990. The Assembly also requested the Director-General to report in 1991 on possible ways of providing multidisciplinary technical advice from the United Nations system at the country level, including the concept of multidisciplinary teams.

56. With respect to the role of the resident co-ordinator, there have also been a number of developments. Pursuant to Assembly resolution 42/196, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions identified a number of areas to improve the functioning of the resident co-ordinator system, and examined them in detail in 1988-1989. In April 1989, ACC endorsed a set of principles (ACC/1989/DEC/1-20) that were reported to the General Assembly.

57. In paragraph 15 (b) of its resolution 44/211, the General Assembly decided to reinforce the team-leadership capacity of the resident co-ordinator within the United Nations system at the country level for the integration of the sectoral

inputs of the system and for the effective and coherent co-ordination of the response of the United Nations system to the national programme framework, through, inter alia: (a) a clarified and strengthened mandate from ACC, in accordance with Assembly resolutions 32/197, 41/171 and 42/196; (b) the effective co-ordination of technical advice and input from the United Nations system; and (c) closer co-operation of the field representation of the United Nations system at the country level with the resident co-ordinator.

58. It is evident that the pace of implementation of recommendation 11 has markedly accelerated. The numerous provisions of resolution 44/211 are specific, integrated and cross-related. The Assembly explicitly called for a three-year schedule for implementation by all organs, organizations and bodies of the system.

Recommendation 12

59. Considerable progress has been made towards implementation of this recommendation. Following the system-wide review of field offices conducted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/196 and the joint statement addressed by organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) (comprising UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in mid-1988 to their respective country-level staff on the question of sharing common premises and services, local-level JCGP groups in many countries have reviewed this question. Other organizations with country or subregional offices (the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in relation to United Nations information centres) have also endorsed the principle of common premises and shared facilities, subject to practical constraints which in some instances are considerable.

60. In its resolution 44/211, the General Assembly emphasized that the United Nations system at the country level should be structured and composed in such a way that it corresponds to programmes rather than to its own institutional structure. To that end the Assembly requested, inter alia, all organs and bodies to make, without delay, the necessary arrangements, in co-operation with host Governments and without additional costs to developing countries, to establish common premises at the country level. The Director-General was requested to monitor and to report annually on progress made on this specific measure.

61. As the Director-General pointed out in his report to the General Assembly on this question (A/44/324), however, there are various constraints in terms of available space, the need to appropriate funds within the system for capital costs of building extensions, and other practical difficulties. Increased sharing of facilities at the country level can be expected to emerge over time.

Recommendation 13

62. It is the view of ACC that those agreements which have been elaborated over the years under its auspices to harmonize budgeting practices and budget presentation among organizations of the system constitute a solid basis for harmonization of budgeting practices and improved transparency and comparability of budget documents, to the extent that those views are compatible with the need of individual governing bodies for consistency in the presentation of successive budgets, as well as the specificity of organizations' mandates, structures and activities. In the opinion of ACC, the benefit to be derived from the search for greater harmonization of budgeting methods and techniques is primarily in the sharing of new ideas and the possibility of organizations building on the experience of others.

63. A study by the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Budgeting in the Organizations of the United Nations System" (A/45/130), which will be before the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, focuses on several aspects of budgeting in the organizations and attempts to examine the extent to which efforts by ACC have actually resulted in standardization and comparability in budgets of the United Nations system as well as the differences that have remained. It has been decided to reconvene in 1990 the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) of ACC to consider, inter alia, approaches to the harmonization of programme budget and medium-term plan cycles in the United Nations system.

III. STRUCTURE OF THE SECRETARIAT

A. General recommendations

Recommendation 14

64. This recommendation envisages a simplification of the organizational structure of the Secretariat, bearing in mind the need to develop clearer lines of authority, responsibility, accountability and communication and to improve co-ordination in order to avoid duplication of work. As has been reported previously, with the further developments reported in paragraphs 84 to 111 below, major restructuring has been carried out in the political, administrative and information areas.

65. With respect to the secretariat structure in the economic and social sectors, General Assembly resolution 32/197 provides the basic framework for the current clustering of substantive activities, in particular with regard to the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, UNCTAD and the regional commissions. In addition, in 1987 United Nations activities on social policy and development were concentrated under the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, incorporating the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (which for that purpose was detached from the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs) and the co-ordination of all United Nations drug-related programmes.

66. In line with recommendation 14, some entities of the Secretariat were reorganized. In UNCTAD, units were clustered around a few major related substantive programmes, the support for technical co-operation activities was strengthened and the production of data and statistical services was also rationalized. ECLAC decided on the merging of several organizational units with a view to simplification of its organizational structure. Following a review by ECA of its structure and organization with a view to implementing the tasks entrusted to it in a more co-ordinated and cost-effective manner, there was a substantial realignment of administrative structures and, while no programme was terminated, a consolidation and integration of programmes for enhanced programme delivery.

67. The Secretary-General recognizes that the restructuring of the economic and social sectors is still pending. Delays in the reform process in this area can be attributed to a number of factors, in particular, to the close linkage between the structure of the Secretariat and its work programme and the review of the structure of the intergovernmental bodies, which is still incomplete (see recommendation 8, paras. 38-42). Accordingly, the Secretary-General believes that the reform period for the economic and social sectors should be extended to ensure that proposals for such reorganization as may be appropriate are well conceived and planned, taking into account decisions at the intergovernmental level.

Recommendation 15

68. In section I, paragraph 1 (b), of its resolution 41/213, the General Assembly, with respect to recommendation 15, calling essentially for a reduction by 15 per cent of regular budget posts and by 25 per cent of high-level posts, noted that the percentages referred to therein were arrived at in a pragmatic manner and should be regarded as targets in the formulation of the Secretary-General's plans for implementation. The Secretary-General was requested to implement them with flexibility in order to avoid, inter alia, negative impact on programmes and on the structure and composition of the Secretariat, bearing in mind the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity of staff, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution.

69. The programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, 11/ as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/202, includes a staffing table of 10,057 regular budget-funded posts. As compared with a staffing table of 11,422 posts originally approved for the biennium 1988-1989, this represents a reduction of 1,365 posts, or 11.95 per cent, which has been achieved over the period of three years - 1987, 1988, 1989 - envisaged in recommendation 15.

70. It is worth recalling at this point the main steps of the process through which this post reduction of 12 per cent in rounded terms has been achieved. The Secretary-General presented his plans for the implementation of recommendation 15 to the General Assembly at its forty-third session, namely the abolition of 1,465 posts, or 13 per cent of the staffing table, including a reduction of 14 per cent in conference and library services (see A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, chap. I). The General Assembly, in resolution 43/213, decided that only 10 per cent of the posts in conference and library services should be cut, thus reducing the staffing table of

the Organization by 1,365 posts or 12.1 per cent. It also requested the Secretary-General to present recommendations for absorbing the costs of the posts "restored" in conference and library services, including, to the maximum extent possible, through the elimination of additional posts. It further requested the Secretary-General, in further implementing recommendation 15, to take into account [illegible] guidelines that had been formulated in resolution 41/213 and reaffirmed [illegible] 211, as well as an additional guideline, and to implement [illegible] 15 in a balanced manner, taking into account recommendations 41, 46, [illegible] his programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, the Secretary-General identified 1,368 posts for reduction - or 11.97 per cent - and stated that he was most definitely not in a position to propose further reductions to offset the cost of the posts "restored" by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/213. The Assembly modified slightly the proposal of the Secretary-General by restoring three posts at the Professional level - one in the secretariat of ECA and two in the secretariat of the Joint Inspection Unit - to arrive at an overall reduction of 1,365 posts, or 11.95 per cent, and a staffing table of 10,057 posts for the biennium 1990-1991. 12/

71. With respect to high-level posts, the staffing table of 10,057 regular budget-funded posts for the biennium 1990-1991 includes 47 high-level posts, that is, 1 post at the Director-General level, 26 posts of Under-Secretary-General and 20 posts of Assistant Secretary-General. 13/ There were 57 such posts originally approved at the beginning of the biennium 1988-1989. The reduction has therefore been of 10 posts, or 17.5 per cent.

72. In his plans for the implementation of recommendation 15 presented to the General Assembly at its forty-third session (see A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, chap. I), the Secretary-General had initially envisaged the suppression of 14 high-level posts. These 14 posts were, however, not identified. The Assembly accepted this proposal implicitly in its resolution 43/213 and adopted a programme budget outline for the biennium 1990-1991 with a total preliminary estimate reflecting, inter alia, that reduction of 14 high-level posts. In his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, the Secretary-General proposed a reduction by 10 posts, instead of 14, which was endorsed by the Assembly through its resolution 44/202 A of 21 December 1989 on the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

73. At the same time, the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/201 B, section I, reaffirmed its resolution 43/213, accepted the proposals of the Secretary-General (a reduction of 10 posts) and requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to identify, as soon as possible in the course of the biennium 1990-1991, four additional high-level posts for reduction.

74. In addition to regular budget-funded posts, the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 indicates that 2,549 posts will be funded by extrabudgetary resources. This represents an increase of 637 posts, or 33 per cent, from the beginning of the biennium 1988-1989. Most of these additional posts are in part IV - Economic, social and humanitarian activities - (512 additional posts) and in part VII - Common support services - (118 additional posts) of the programme budget. Among these 2,549 posts are 3 posts at the Assistant Secretary-General level, the same as in 1988-1989. These three high-level posts were and are in

section 18, the United Nations Environment Programme, section 19, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), and section 20, International drug control, of the programme budget.

75. There are currently the same number of high-level posts funded by programmes and funds which are not part of the programme budget, such as section 25 (International Court of Justice), UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, as at the time of the adoption of resolution 41/213. In his plans for the implementation of recommendation 15, the Secretary-General indicated that he had brought that recommendation to the attention of the heads of the organizations concerned and had requested them to highlight to their governing bodies the fact that the Member States represented in those bodies had joined in the unanimous decision of the General Assembly to adopt resolution 41/213. In the first progress report and the final report on the implementation of resolution 41/213 (A/42/234 and Corr.1 and A/44/222 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General informed the Assembly that he had made such requests to the various governing bodies concerned and that a few high-level posts funded from extrabudgetary resources had remained unfilled. The Assembly, in its various resolutions on the implementation of resolution 41/213, did not refer specifically to the implementation of this particular target of recommendation 15.

76. In assessing the effects of the post reduction on programmes, it is necessary to make a distinction between the biennium 1988-1989 and the current biennium. During the first period, the process of post reduction took place. At present the Organization has a Secretariat with 12 per cent fewer posts funded from the regular budget.

77. The programme budget for 1988-1989 was adopted by the General Assembly with a 15 per cent turnover rate for Professional-level staff and a 10 per cent rate for General Service staff. This meant that budgetary financial resources were given for only 85 per cent of the Professional staffing table, on the grounds that the actual vacancy rate in the Secretariat was not less than 15 per cent and in order to implement the post reduction targeted also at 15 per cent by resolution 41/213. During the biennium, such a high vacancy rate was indeed maintained while posts were being first frozen and then suppressed - down to a level of 12 per cent - when the General Assembly adopted in December 1989 the programme budget for 1990-1991. In other words, the number and distribution of staff funded from the regular budget, actually on board, had to remain approximately the same in 1988-1989 as at the end of the biennium 1986-1987. A second factor is that the programmes for 1988-1989, presented by the Secretary-General and adopted by the Assembly, were, quantitatively and qualitatively, a continuation of those of the previous biennium. The programme budget for 1988-1989 (A/42/6) was presented as "transitional" and, in his introduction, the Secretary-General stated, explicitly, that this approach was imposed by the circumstances, including the request of the General Assembly that the reduction of the size of the Secretariat be implemented while avoiding a negative impact on programmes.

78. The combination of those two factors - continuity of staff levels and programme continuity - may explain to a certain extent why it was *a priori* conceivable for the General Assembly to assume, in adopting resolution 41/213, that the process of implementation of recommendation 15 would not, *per se*, affect

negatively the delivery of the mandated activities of the Organization. A high vacancy rate was, however, not the only obstacle to overcome. The process of post reduction was in itself disruptive, by the attention it required from programme managers and by its obvious effects on the attitudes and morale of the staff. The Organization was also hampered by an acute financial crisis, coupled to some extent by an expressed lack of confidence from some Governments in its ability to perform its role. It had to devote a large amount of its energy to cope with a situation of daily financial uncertainty, while being criticized for its alleged uncontrolled growth, inefficiency, undue complexity, fragmentation and lack of effectiveness. At the same time, the Secretary-General received new mandates and took new initiatives, notably in the domain of peace and security, which required, inter alia, the mobilization of a significant part of the personnel of the Secretariat.

79. Yet, in this difficult context, mandated programmes were globally delivered, as confirmed by the report on programme performance for the biennium 1988-1989 (see A/45/218 and Add.1). Such programme performance, measured by the proportion of programmed outputs that were actually implemented during the biennium 1988-1989, was 74 per cent. This is a rough indicator, because a number of activities of the Organization, notably in peace-keeping matters, are not "programmed" and also because many services, including those provided by the Department of Conference Services, are not counted among the 8,954 programmed "outputs". It is, however, an indicator that can be compared with previous rates of implementation of 76 per cent for the biennium 1986-1987 and 82 per cent for the biennium 1984-1985. The outputs that were not implemented were either "postponed" or "terminated". Rates of postponement were 9 per cent in 1984-1985, 13 per cent in 1986-1987 and 11 per cent in 1988-1989, while rates of termination were, for the same three biennium, 8 per cent, 11 per cent and 15 per cent. The lower number of postponements in 1988-1989 than in 1986-1987 is of course a positive sign. Furthermore, the increase in the number and proportion of outputs terminated suggests that more attention was given to redressing, during the implementation of the programme budget, the deficiencies of the programming process. Another indicator of programme performance is the number of outputs that were added during a biennium to those initially mandated, either through legislative decisions or at the initiative of the Secretariat. There were 441 such outputs in 1988-1989, as compared with 843 in 1986-1987 and 1,062 in 1984-1985. Thus, during the process of implementation of recommendation 15, the capacity of the Organization to expand its programmes and produce new outputs, while retained, was, nevertheless, reduced.

80. A negative impact on mandated programmes was, however, on the whole, avoided and this can be explained by the following factors:

(a) Parts of the organizational structure of the Secretariat were reorganized and improved, notably in the political and administrative sectors, and the technological modernization of the Organization was actively pursued;

(b) While the Organization increased dramatically its activities in peace-keeping and peace-making, programmes financed by the regular budget, representing most outputs and services and absorbing most of the budgeted resources, did not expand during the biennium 1988-1989. There was legislative

restraint. As indicated above, the outputs added through revised estimates and statements of programme budget implications were below traditional levels;

(c) Programmes and added activities were implemented by stretching the capacity and improving the productivity of some parts of the Secretariat. Exceptional efforts responded to exceptional circumstances. There was no evidence of a decrease in the quality of the outputs and services provided by the Organization;

(d) The process of post reduction was undertaken, not through precise work-load analyses, for which neither was a scientific basis provided by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts nor was time made available as a consequence of financial constraints, but through a pragmatic assessment of the capacity of the various departments and offices to manage their programmes while "absorbing" a cut. For some programmes, as noted above, the number of staff funded from extrabudgetary resources was increased. Some discretionary outputs were not produced. The structure and composition of the Secretariat were not significantly altered beyond those explicitly approved early in the process, as instructed by the General Assembly. The post reduction was not used as an instrument to redistribute resources among various activities in an attempt to establish priorities different from those determined by Member States in the programme budget.

81. The post reduction of 12 per cent became de jure effective with the adoption of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. The programmatic content of this budget, which had been presented by the Secretary-General in the light, inter alia, of such a reduction, included mandated activities reflecting a strong element of continuity with previous bienniums. A number of programme elements and outputs were regrouped in order to enhance the capacity of the Secretariat to fulfil the objectives set by legislative mandate. Technological innovations and the modernization of the modes of operation of the Organization were embodied in the programme budget. The Secretary-General believes that the programmes that are part of the programme budget for the current biennium will not be negatively affected by the level of implementation of recommendation 15 at the end of 1989, and the General Assembly adopted the programme budget on such an understanding.

82. In its resolution 44/200 A, the General Assembly, recognizing the progress achieved to date on the implementation of the overall post reduction mandated by it in it resolution 43/213, acknowledged that the Secretary-General was not in a position at that stage to propose further post reductions and decided to consider, in the light of the present report, any further proposals that he might put forward.

83. At this juncture, it is important to consider the relationship between the level of staff resources and the volume of the programmes and activities that the Organization is mandated to implement. The Secretariat has to be in a position to respond effectively to new or enhanced mandates. Continuing efforts at more efficiency and greater effectiveness should not be perceived as a suggestion that all additional activities can be accommodated within existing resources. Redeployment of staff among programmes should be an integral part of the functioning of a dynamic organization, but there are technical as well as practical limits to this and other forms of redistribution of resources. A proper balance

between the number of staff funded from the regular budget and the number of staff funded, in various ways, from contributions for peace-keeping and voluntary contributions, has to be maintained in the Organization as a whole. Further structural reforms may be required, but their raison d'être must be to increase the capacity of the Organization to accomplish its role, not to reduce its staff. The Secretary-General sees the implementation of recommendation 15 in this context.

B. Political affairs

Recommendation 16

84. This recommendation has been implemented. Further to the extensive restructuring reported on in the Secretary-General's final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1), whereby the political sector was divided into seven entities with a view to a clear distribution of functions and elimination of duplication, the Secretary-General took additional measures to strengthen the Organization's capacity to deal with these primary responsibilities.

85. Owing to extensive and increasing demands for the good offices of the Secretary-General for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the heavy, additional responsibilities that this demand has placed on him, the Chef de Cabinet and the members of the Executive Office, the Secretary-General decided in 1988 to strengthen that Office and to make certain structural changes affecting that Office and the Office for Special Political Affairs. The responsibilities of the latter Office for supporting the Secretary-General in his peace-making activities in relation to Afghanistan, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Cyprus and certain other situations were transferred to the Executive Office, in accordance with the Secretary-General's intention that these activities should be handled under his direct, personal supervision. The Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs retains responsibility for the conduct of the growing number of peace-keeping operations.

86. Furthermore, in January 1990, the Secretary-General established a Senior Planning and Monitoring Group for Peace-keeping Operations to assist and advise him in the planning and monitoring of peace-keeping operations. The Group is chaired by the Secretary-General or, in his absence, by the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. The Group advises the Secretary-General on peace-keeping and related matters and, in particular, enhances inter-departmental co-ordination in this area by bringing together the senior officials with an overall responsibility for peace-keeping and related matters.

Recommendation 17

87. The recommendation that the administrative functions of the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities should be transferred to the Department of Administration and Management has been implemented. The Field Operations Division was established in the Office of General Services with responsibility for the administration of field missions established by the Security Council or by the Secretary-General. In addition, the recommendation that most of the staff in the

field offices should be recruited locally has, to the extent possible, also been implemented.

88. In assessing the impact of implementation, it is clear that the situation with regard to field missions has acquired a totally different character since the adoption of resolution 41/213. The significant and unprecedented expansion of peace-keeping and related activities and the subsequent establishment of a number of new field missions during 1988 and 1989, coupled with the mandated retrenchments that have taken place during the same period, have had a serious impact on the ability of the Field Operations Division to carry on normal activities. The unpredictable timing of, and the particularly short lead-time normally allowed for, the establishment of new operations has created a range of difficulties.

89. As it is not possible to project accurately the level of peace-keeping operations and related activities which the Organization will embark on at a given time, it is particularly important for the Division to undertake all appropriate steps to enhance its ability to plan for and respond to new demands in a timely and effective manner. Procedures are also being developed to ensure the availability of a cadre of core personnel, skilled and trained in the required disciplines, who can be moved quickly to a new mission location, and to establish an appropriate reserve stock of commonly used equipment and stores items.

Recommendation 18

90. As indicated in the Secretary-General's final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, paras. 63-65), most of the activities relating to the dissemination of news and political analysis to other departments have been consolidated in the new Office for Research and the Collection of Information and every effort has been made to eliminate duplication of effort by political departments and offices.

91. The former Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization was not involved in any such activities except those specifically mandated to it by the General Assembly such as the dissemination of information on decolonization and political analysis on decolonization-related issues. The Department's role in the dissemination of information on decolonization has, since 1971, been mandated each year by a resolution of the Assembly, the latest being resolution 44/102 of 11 December 1989. The resolutions have been implemented each year by the issuing of bulletins on decolonization and through the Department of Public Information and by the publication of a number of pamphlets, booklets and other information material for which the Department provides the substantive input. The activities of the new Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, formed by the consolidation of the former Department and the former Office of Special Political Questions, have been broadened by the additional responsibilities stemming from the programmes previously implemented by the Office of Special Political Questions. Those programmes include the monitoring and analysis of specific political situations in Africa in connection with the exercise of the good offices of the Secretary-General. In the fulfilment of its responsibilities the present Department has made extensive use of the information provided by the Office for Research and the Collection of Information and has co-operated closely with the

Department of Public Information. Implementation of this recommendation has thus been beneficial to the cost-effectiveness of several subprogrammes of the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship.

92. With respect to the political analysis functions of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, those functions have been rationalized to avoid duplication with the work of other offices by focusing on three specific areas, namely, the analysis of political trends and developments with emphasis on their longer-range significance, the servicing of United Nations bodies dealing with issues specifically related to the strengthening of international security, and activities relating to the promotion of peace and follow-up to the purposes of the International Year of Peace. The transfer to the Office for Research and the Collection of Information of certain staff resources formerly engaged in the daily collection of political information has been achieved without adverse impact on programme delivery.

Recommendation 19

93. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, para. 66), this recommendation has been implemented. The Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia now includes the secretariat of the Council for Namibia, which previously fell under the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. For the purpose of effective and efficient management of resources the entire Office of the Commissioner for Namibia has been brought under the overall umbrella of the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. That measure, however, did not affect the reporting channels of communication between the Council and the Commissioner as established by the Assembly in its resolution 2248 (S-V) of 19 May 1967.

94. The administrative structure has been streamlined through the consolidation of the two administrative offices previously established within the Department and the Office of the Commissioner into one executive office in the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. There is evidence that these organizational changes have not affected adversely programmes and services in this area.

95. As a result of Namibia's independence, a thorough review of the existing structure will be undertaken and the results will be reflected in the revised estimates to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session as mandated by the Assembly in section V of its resolution 44/201 B.

Recommendation 20

96. The recommendation has been implemented by the changes described below in the organizational structure of the Department for Disarmament Affairs with a view to enhancing substantive output.

97. The establishment of a new Monitoring, Analysis and Studies Branch has combined under one organizational unit various interrelated activities previously carried out by a number of units of the Department. The primary tasks of the Branch are to follow up on developments concerning arms limitation and disarmament-related deliberations not only at the multilateral level but also at the bilateral and regional levels in order to implement the action programme of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and to carry out various disarmament studies to be prepared by the Secretary-General with the assistance of experts, at the request of the General Assembly. The publication and information activities of the Department have also been consolidated as the Publications and World Disarmament Campaign Branch.

98. The Department's publication activities have been reviewed and improved in order to enhance their value to Member States, particularly those with limited resources for specialization and representation. The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook has been reorganized in order to improve its clarity and readability as a reference source and is now published well in advance of the session of the General Assembly following the one it covers. The Department's periodic review Disarmament, which is now being issued four times a year instead of three, covers a wider range of topics related to arms limitation, disarmament and security, and the range of contributors has also been broadened. In addition, the Department has begun a new reference publication, issued shortly after the adjournment of the General Assembly, containing a summary of relevant discussions and decisions taken during the session in order to facilitate preparation of assessments of the session by Member States themselves. This reference material is published in response to a request by the General Assembly to this effect and is a further concrete response to the intent of recommendation 20.

99. Within the framework of the World Disarmanent Campaign, the Department is placing increasing emphasis on the implementation of those guidelines of the Campaign which call for the encouragement of bilateral and multilateral exchanges on the basis of reciprocity and mutual agreement among government officials and experts of different countries. Consequently, the Department now organizes high-level meetings of government representatives and experts to discuss various topical issues on the agenda of deliberative and negotiating bodies with a view to facilitating their search for common ground. One such meeting held in 1988 dealt with the question of verification of disarmament agreements and the role of the United Nations. The other meeting, which took place in 1989, examined the question of disarmament and international security.

100. The Department's subprogramme relating to the Disarmament Fellowship Programme has been expanded to include the provision of training and advisory services to Member States upon their request. The activity includes the organization of workshops for junior governmental officials and the rendering of advisory assistance on various substantive matters of particular interest to a given Government and regional or subregional governmental organizations.

101. The Committee and Conference Services Branch and the Geneva Branch, whose work is most directly related to the needs of Member States, continue to carry out their functions as mandated.

102. It may be noted that while the implementation of recommendation 20 has not given rise to any adverse effects on the functioning of the Department, but rather to the contrary has enhanced its effectiveness, the addition of mandates entrusted to the Department by the General Assembly at its forty-third and forty-fourth sessions without additional resources has created heavy demands upon the existing structure.

Recommendation 21

103. Functions relating to decolonization and trusteeship are now the responsibility of the Division of Decolonization and Trusteeship within the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. During the period 1980 to 1990, five territories became independent, which reduced the number of Non-Self-Governing Territories from 23 to 18 (Namibia excluded). The final result of the post reduction exercise as shown in the 1990-1991 programme budget indicates that only 13 Professional posts are now assigned to decolonization activities (excluding Namibia) compared to 23 at the beginning of 1987. Despite this reduced manpower, there has been no negative impact on programme delivery.

Recommendation 22

104. The administration of special economic assistance programmes has been transferred to UNDP except in cases of political sensitivity where the responsibility has been assigned to the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes in the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. That Unit is, in particular, responsible for the implementation of special economic assistance programmes with regard to African emergency situations.

Recommendation 23

105. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, para. 71), the report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/201 entitled "Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator" (UNDRO) (A/42/657) included a comprehensive review and assessment of existing mechanisms and arrangements for emergency assistance and co-ordination. In its decision 42/433 of 11 December 1987, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of conclusions and recommendations contained in his report.

106. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of that decision (A/43/731) outlined the specific measures undertaken in this regard, including a review by the Management Advisory Service, Department of Administration and Management, to adjust the work programme and organization of UNDRO in order to focus its activities on sudden natural disasters. Subsequent organizational changes within UNDRO are reflected in the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. UNDRO has developed its information system, its assistance to Governments for disaster investigation programmes and its capacity to respond immediately and effectively to sudden emergencies. There has also been progress in

the modalities of co-operation between UNDRO and UNDP following the report of the Joint UNDP-UNDRO Task Force, which contains specific proposals including the exchange of staff betweeen the two organizations, a closer partnership in disaster investigation and in disaster response activities at the field level, a joint training programme and the delineation of the responsibilities of the Director-General.

107. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 43/116 of 8 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to undertake studies and consultations in order to consider the need for the establishment, within the United Nations system, of a mechanism or arrangement to ensure the implementation and overall co-ordination of relief programmes to internally displaced persons. In his report (A/44/520), the Secretary-General concluded that he did not believe it necessary or appropriate to establish a new mechanism or arrangement for this purpose, but rather to strengthen existing arrangements in order to enhance accessibility and effectiveness.

108. Emergency and disaster situations are by definition extraordinary events whose nature and scope cannot be fully anticipated, nor is it possible to determine in advance the appropriate response mechanism. The variant nature of disaster and emergency situations requires a multifaceted response drawing on the capacities of various entities of the United Nations system. UNDRO was established to provide greater coherence and direction to these efforts. The measures outlined above have contributed to greater co-ordination and rationalization so as to minimize duplication and to ensure the most effective utilization of United Nations resources in the field. In this context, attention is called in particular to the recommendations of the Joint UNDP-UNDRO Task Force, which are being implemented. The primary focus of action is at the field level where the UNDP resident representative/resident co-ordinator is called on to play a key role in emergency situations. There is a regular process of consultation with all relevant field representatives of the United Nations system, as well as with the donor community, both governmental and non-governmental, in co-operation with the host Government. Specific instructions have been prepared for UNDP resident representatives/resident co-ordinators advising them of their responsibilities in this regard.

109. The Special Emergency Programmes Unit within the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship deals with complex emergency situations that involve multiple factors and include politically sensitive issues requiring the Secretary-General to co-ordinate the work of a number of agencies in the United Nations system. Complex emergency situations are frequently characterized by civil strife, the presence of large numbers of displaced persons and varying degrees of famine. They can be distinguished, firstly, from those situations which fall within the mandate of a single United Nations agency, e.g. food shortages (WFP), epidemics (WHO), child health (UNICEF), locust depredations (FAO) and, secondly, from sudden natural disasters that require the intervention of UNDRO. With clear lines of demarcation for special emergency programmes, programme delivery has been enhanced.

Recommendation 24

110. As indicated in his first progress report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 (A/42/234 and Corr.1, para. 33), UNDRO is being retained as a separate entity located at Geneva.

111. The General Assembly, in its resolution 41/201 of 8 December 1986, reaffirmed the mandate of UNDRO, while CPC at its twenty-ninth session noted recent decisions of the Assembly whereby the mandate, identity and location of UNDRO were to be maintained. 14/

C. Economic and social affairs

Recommendation 25

112. The review of the tasks performed by the various secretariat entities in the economic and social sectors envisaged in this recommendation is, as was recognized by the Group of Experts and indicated in previous reports of the Secretary-General, intimately linked to the review of the intergovernmental structure. As indicated above, there is still no agreement on the changes in the intergovernmental structure. During the secretariat review that was initiated in December 1986 under the direction and guidance of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, particular emphasis was given to global analysis and reporting, energy and natural resources, science and technology, economic and technical co-operation among developing countries, national development strategies and the relationship between operational and substantive activities. The review is an ongoing process and has already served as the basis for intensified consultations among the various secretariat entities involved with a view to eliminating duplication and enhancing responsiveness to the needs of Member States.

113. With respect to the evaluation of the activities of the Centre for Science and Technology for Development and consideration of the feasibility of integrating the Centre into the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, it may be recalled that the Secretary-General proposed that the Executive Director of the Centre report through the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs. This matter was considered by the General Assembly at its forty-third session and it was decided to take no action on the proposal.

114. A 10-year review of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, 15/ which included the work of the Centre, was carried out by the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development, 15/ at its tenth session. 16/ On the basis of that review, the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/14 A of 26 October 1989, reaffirmed the validity of the Vienna Programme of Action and expressed support for the work of the Centre. In its resolution 44/14 C, the Assembly requested the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to ensure close monitoring and follow-up of the mandated programmes and activities of the United Nations system in the areas of

science and technology for development. A further in-depth evaluation of the major programme on science and technology will be carried out in 1992, and a progress report will be submitted to CPC at its thirtieth session, in May 1990.

115. The question of the integration of the Centre for Science and Technology for Development into the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development was considered in the context of the implementation of recommendation 14 (see paras. 64-67 above). It is noted that the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development "was generally of the view that its existing secretariat support structure, in particular the organizational identity and autonomy of the Centre, should be maintained". 17/

116. With regard to enhancing the authority of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to carry out his responsibilities as set forth in General Assembly resolution 32/197 and subsequent legislation, it is emphasized that the Director-General operates under the authority of the Secretary-General; accordingly, no additional legislative authority is required. The need to ensure the necessary capacity to the Director-General to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to him will be kept under constant review.

117. As a practical measure to facilitate inter-agency co-ordination, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation has been designated to serve as Chairman of the Organizational Committee and Secretary of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

118. It has not been considered practical or feasible at this stage to establish at a single location all departments and offices of the United Nations dealing with economic and social affairs.

Recommendation 26

119. As indicated in relation to recommendation 25, the review of the economic and social sectors of the Secretariat has served as a basis for intensified consultations among the entities involved. In the case of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, General Assembly resolution 32/197 provides the basic terms of reference for field operational activities of technical co-operation and applied research and policy analysis. In this context, the Department has further strengthened and intensified its co-operation with other entities to further increase complementarity of work. Of particular importance in this regard is the enhanced co-operation between that Department and the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, given the responsibility of the latter for research and global analysis.

120. In carrying out the tasks entrusted to it, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development strives to be fully responsive to the actual needs of developing countries. The evaluation activities carried out at the programme level and at the project level, as well as the strengthened co-operative arrangements with other entities referred to above, are important elements in continuously

enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department in responding to the needs of developing countries. The issue of possible overlapping and duplication with UNDP, which, when it occurs, is primarily due to the shifting of executing agency responsibilities and functions from the Department to entities like the UNDP/Office for Project Services, is kept under careful monitoring; it has also been reviewed and commented on, inter alia, in the context of a recent report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the UNDP Office for Project Services.

Recommendation 27

121. Every effort continues to be made to reflect the importance of the work of the regional commissions in terms both of participation in consultative mechanisms and of substantive contributions to the work of intergovernmental bodies. In his report on the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council (E/1989/95), the Secretary-General noted that, in order to improve the interface between the regional commissions and the Council, the executive secretaries had proposed the holding of separate, informal meetings on selected issues with members of the Council. Such meetings were held during the second regular session of the Council in 1989. Other measures have also been introduced to assist the Council in its consideration of issues relating to regional co-operation, including improvements in the format and content of the Secretary-General's annual report on regional co-operation to incorporate a section on interregional co-operation and to focus on issues requiring attention by the Council.

122. In response to that recommendation, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation commissioned a review of the functioning of the regional commissions. As a result, a report entitled "The Regional Commissions of the United Nations: Future role and activities" was discussed among executive secretaries, as well as between them and other concerned United Nations senior officials. The report was subsequently made available to Member States. Further action on the implementation of some of the recommendations in the report will be taken, as appropriate, following consultation between the Director-General and the executive secretaries.

Recommendation 28

123. Resources for administration, conference and general services for different bodies at Geneva, including ECE, are included under the budget of the United Nations Office at Geneva and managed in an integrated fashion, thus giving rise to economies of scale. To maintain this integrated management, which has proven to be both efficient and cost-effective while answering the need for comparability among the regional commissions, the proposed programme budget now includes, in the introduction to section 10 (ECE), the proportion of resources provided by the United Nations Office at Geneva to ECE. Further harmonization in the presentation of the programme budget proposals of the regional commissions is being contemplated, as suggested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. 18/

Recommendation 29

124. In his first report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 (A/42/234 and Corr.1, para. 20 (c)), the Secretary-General stated that the functions of the Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters relating to the technical servicing of meetings were being assumed by the Office for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services. The Assembly, in its resolution 42/211, requested the Secretary-General to review those arrangements. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General reviewed the matter and detailed information in this regard was subsequently provided in the revised estimates for the 1988-1989 programme budget (A/C.5/43/30 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1).

125. In paragraph 2 (g) of its resolution 1988/77, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General, in the context of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213, to submit proposals on the structure and composition of a separate and identifiable secretariat support structure for the Council which would undertake substantive functions and technical servicing. The Secretary-General, in his report on the subject (E/1989/95), advised that he was considering ways and means of providing effective and coherent secretariat support for the Council and of strengthening the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and would report further on the matter to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session. In paragraph 26 of its resolution 1989/114, the Council requested the Secretary-General to take the following points into consideration in providing secretariat support for the Council: (a) there should be an organizationally distinct and identifiable secretariat structure for providing substantive support in regard to the preparation of thematic analyses and consolidated reports; (b) the expertise of other organizations of the United Nations system should be drawn upon, as appropriate; and (c) such secretariat support should be provided, as appropriate, inter alia, within existing resources, through, inter alia, redeployment of staff and the use of extrabudgetary resources.

126. In his note to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields (A/44/747, para. 13), the Secretary-General conveyed his decision to assign to the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation responsibility for providing the substantive support called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/114.

127. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 44/103 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, the General Assembly stressed the need for the full implementation of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1988/44, including the provisions related to the secretariat support structure of the Council, and requested the Secretary-General to present a report on the implementation of these resolutions to the Council in order to enable it to review this matter at its second regular session of 1990.

128. The Secretary-General has also noted that several major international deliberations that were expected to develop new approaches and identify priority concerns of the international community would have critical implications for the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social sphere. Accordingly, the Secretary-General believes that it would be appropriate to await the results of those deliberations and to integrate them into his [illegible] concerning secretariat services for economic and social matters.

[illegible] to the aspect of the recommendation dealing with editing, a [illegible] confirmed that there is no duplication of editing efforts, but [illegible] division of labour between editors in the Editorial and Official [illegible] of the Department of Conference Services and editors in the Office [illegible] and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services who work in a well co-ordinated and co-operative manner, following the same editorial guidelines and practices.

D. Administration and other fields

130. The search for greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness has been a priority consideration in the administrative area throughout the reform period. Significant changes have occurred both in terms of organizational structure and in procedures and methods of work. The basic structural changes are detailed below under recommendations 30 and 32. These modifications resulted in clearer lines of responsibility and better co-ordination. At the same time, a thorough re-examination of the information systems that support the decision-making process [illegible] administrative area was conducted first in 1987 and completed in 1988 [illegible] study of all administrative processes in the Department of [illegible] and Management. The results of that examination led to the [illegible] that a more efficient system for processing and recording transactions had to be developed. A comprehensive proposal for an integrated management information system was therefore submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-third session (A/C.5/43/24) and approved in the context of the revised estimates for the 1988-1989 programme budget. At its forty-fourth session, the Assembly approved an amount of $8.5 million for the biennium 1990-1991 under the regular budget.

Recommendation 30

131. The reorganization of the Department of Administration and Management is now completed. Through reassignment of functions, consolidation of responsibilities and streamlining, significant savings in posts were possible and have been reflected in the 1990-1991 programme budget now approved.

Recommendation 31

132. Although the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts recommended the abolition of the Management Advisory Service, the Secretary-General reported in his second progress report (A/43/286 and Corr.1, paras. 57-58), that, upon careful examination of the question, he could not propose such abolition without seriously

affecting the work of the Department of Administration and Management. The integration of this unit into the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance has facilitated the work of the Service, which has performed particularly important functions during the period under review and continues to do so.

Recommendation 32

133. The functions of programme planning, covering United Nations activities in the economic and social sectors and formerly carried out by the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, have been redeployed to the Office responsible for the programme budget within the Department of Administration and Management. The functions of planning, programming, budgeting and monitoring are now placed under a single organizational unit.

Recommendation 33

134. As reported in the second progress report (ibid., para. 59), a review of the liaison offices in New York of various Secretariat activities was carried out in 1988 in connection with the implementation of recommendation 15 (see A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, chap. I).

135. The main finding of the review, based on replies to a questionnaire, on interviews and on desk surveys, was that the bulk of the activities of the liaison offices was substantive in nature. Substantive work includes providing, gathering and exchanging specialized information on the work programme and the activities of the parent body and on developments of interest to them, providing inputs into statements and reports, participating in task forces, seminars, conferences and events, and having contacts and exchanges with Governments and permanent missions, with non-governmental organizations, with the academic, scientific, business and financial communities, and with the media. Given the diversity and complexity of the substantive mandates of the parent bodies, it was concluded that consolidating the substantive functions of the offices would have adverse effect on programme implementation. Regarding support services, it was concluded that there was no rationale for consolidating information and reference services, which were substantive in nature and did not overlap.

Recommendation 34

136. The Department of Conference Services, in close co-operation with the Committee on Conferences, has undertaken various measures designed to better plan and service the calendar of conferences, improve the cost-effective delivery and utilization of conference and documentation resources, and introduce and closely monitor the application of quality and quantity controls on documentation and publications. The Department also continues to identify areas of its work where the introduction of new technologies or processes will make it possible to increase efficiency and productivity. For the most part, it can be stated that the efforts of the past three years form part of the normal work programme of the Department.

137. Progress has been achieved in harmonizing the terminology and improving methodologies used for the preparation of the programme budget for conference and library services, at Headquarters and Geneva, and continuing efforts will be made to achieve further improvement.

138. New applications of technological innovations have been particularly important during the years 1987 through 1989. Word-processing technology had been applied to all official languages by the end of 1989. The introduction of word-processing has resulted in an estimated improvement of 25 per cent in the productivity of word-processing services and has greatly facilitated the processing of documents at every stage. Work has advanced on the development of a computer-based system for scheduling meetings and interpreter assignments to enable the Secretariat to respond quickly and flexibly to changing requirements for meetings servicing and to make the most efficient use of scarce resources.

139. The Department has also participated in the pilot project on the optical disc storage of conference documents, undertaken by the United Nations Office at Geneva in response to a recommendation made by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report entitled "Problems of storage and its costs to organizations of the United Nations system" (A/41/806 and Corr.1). In section XVI of its resolution 44/201 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to implement the optical disc project. In addition, progress has been made in the design and installation of a computer-based documents recording, information and tracking system, which is expected to become operational during the biennium 1990-1991.

140. Monitoring of the calendar of conferences has made it possible to make fuller use of permanent staffing capacity, thereby reducing reliance on costly temporary staff at Headquarters. The average utilization factor for United Nations bodies has shown improvement over the past few years, reaching a level of over 70 per cent. On the other hand, the late submission of documents for processing has continued to cause additional expenditures.

141. With respect to external printing arrangements, progress has been achieved in reducing the reliance on external contractors in the processing of United Nations publications and making optimum use of available internal typesetting, printing and binding facilities. Local conditions at some duty stations require that the Organization produce externally the publication programmes of some author departments. In such cases, efforts are made to ensure that such services are purchased under the most favourable conditions.

142. The introduction of desk-top publishing technolcgy for the layout and typesetting of newsletters and for more complicated publications has already begun. It is expected to alleviate some of the burden of purchasing external typesetting services by permitting author departments to prepare camera-ready materials at the time of drafting publications. At the same time, electronic typesetting using the IBM mainframe computer offers another possibility for increasing internal typesetting capacity and thereby reducing the need to incur external processing costs. Software applications have also been developed that make it possible to use WANG word-processing diskettes as inputs for IBM typesetting in several official languages for certain categories of publications.

143. Those processes demand greater support from graphic presentation and printing technicians in terms of providing guidance and advice on the design of desk-top published materials in line with the Organization's general visual image and established editorial standards. To standardize procedures in this fast-developing field, the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments, at the request and with the approval of the Publications Board, has issued an administrative instruction (ST/AI/189/Add.26 of 25 September 1989) governing the use of electronic publishing equipment in the production of United Nations documents and publications, and the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management has issued an administrative instruction (ST/AI/359 of 12 December 1989) that sets standards for desk-top publishing software and hardware.

144. The computer-based systems installed in the printing, cartographic, reproduction and distribution areas have already led to a more efficient use of internal reproduction and distribution services, a reduction in the wastage of paper and supplies, an improvement in the quality of the output, and an improvement in the timeliness of issuance of publications and documentation.

145. The recent introduction of a computer system in the printing services has permitted a higher degree of analysis and, therefore, of managerial control in the evaluation and selection of vendors. The system has made it possible to study in more detail the product lines and cost structures available on the market and to conduct an educated cost-benefit analysis when purchasing services. Whenever possible, printing services are purchased in bulk. For example, given their regular schedules of delivery of manuscripts, it has been possible to enter into a yearly contract for the production of the Monthly Bulletin on Statistics and the Development Forum periodical. Such "bulk" purchasing at lower cost is also applied to the printing of envelopes and stationery. Careful attention is also given to contracting on as wide a geographical basis as possible, taking into account pressure of deadline and responsiveness to the needs of the Organization. Success in this regard has been achieved in the production of the UN Chronicle, which beginning in 1990 will be produced in its six language versions using services in Moscow, Beijing, Egypt and Mexico. Efforts have also been undertaken to improve co-ordination between the printing facilities at Headquarters and the United Nations Office at Geneva so that work may be moved between the duty stations, as technically feasible, and enable a balanced use of available capacities. This effort has been particularly helpful in respect of the processing of some volumes of the United Nations Treaty Series.

146. The Department of Conference Services has also installed equipment that has increased the in-house capacity to print and bind documents and produce higher quality publications. For example, the Goss Unit installed in the Publishing Division makes it possible to print 32 pages on both of the printing presses, increasing production from 126,436,264 page impressions in 1985 to 303,057,220 yearly page impressions at present. The Unit also is capable of printing an eight-page document and an eight-page saddle, making it possible to meet the early morning deadlines for delivery of parliamentary documentation and the daily Journal of meetings. The installation of a computerized projection system and new controls on the printing presses have minimized human error and reduced the correction time for lateral and circumferential registers, resulting in a reduction of the

make-ready waste that inevitably occurs in the preparation of materials. Similarly, a computer-based stock inventory system has resulted in better stock control management and replenishment, while a computer-based system for generating and storing cartographic materials has improved the quality of the materials produced and made them more readily available.

147. In addition, the decision to relinquish in 1987 the external storage space for publications, taken at the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit in its report entitled "Problems of storage and its costs to organizations of the United Nations system" (A/41/806 and Corr.1), resulted in a yearly savings of approximately $400,000 in rental costs. Balancing the objective of a wide dissemination of information about the Organization and its work with the need to cut costs and manage within existing storage space, distribution lists have been pruned to streamline initial print runs by making every attempt to better identify and reach the target audience, attain a reasonable proportion between free and sales distribution, and minimize stock.

148. The Publications Board has continued its regular programme of reviewing and revising, as necessary, the Organization's publishing policies. In accordance with the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences established in General Assembly resolution 44/196 B, that Committee considered at its 1989 session a report on a review of recurrent publications against the criteria set forth in Assembly resolution 38/32 E with a view to identifying publications that could be discontinued or reduced in volume or periodicity of issuance (see A/AC.172/131). The reviews, which had been undertaken at the request of the Assembly on the recommendation of CPC were conducted during the years 1986 through 1989 by the intergovernmental bodies that authorize the issuance of recurrent publications. The exercise resulted in a net increase by 22 in the number of requests for recurrent publications: from 233 in the biennium 1986-1987 to 255 in the biennium 1990-1991. The Committee on Conferences will continue its consideration of this matter at its 1990 session.

149. As recognized by the Member States, the Joint Inspection Unit and the readership, delays in the issuance of United Nations publications detract from their quality and sales potential. In 1986, the Publications Board conducted an in-depth study of the factors causing the delays in issuance, and approved and circulated to author departments and processing services recommendations aimed at redressing the problems and bottle-necks encountered. In late 1988, the Board noted that in some areas progress had been achieved, although there was still ample room for improvement. To illustrate, while electronic publishing technology made it possible to cut down on production time, staffing shortages in a number of areas, particularly in the drafting and editing phases, and conflicting demands placed on processing services by parliamentary documentation in fact were creating new delays. Author departments and the Department of Conference Services, under the auspices of the Publications Board, are continuing to address these problems.

150. Studies have revealed that the reference publications most requested by libraries are the World Economic Survey, the Yearbook of the United Nations and the Yearbook of the International Law Commission. Some of the other publications in greater demand in recent years are manuals and publications on standards in the

fields of project evaluation, national accounting, international trade classification and industrial feasibility studies. Such computer-generated information on the publications of interest to different sectors of the market was used as a basis for analysing how best to attempt to reach them. Based on the study, the list of magazines in which advertisements are placed has been revised and every effort is being made to continue to advertise United Nations publications not only in the media but also at trade shows and exhibits and at book fairs. Increasing use has been made of external or co-publishing arrangements with commercial publishers to permit a wider dissemination of United Nations publications at no cost to the Organization.

151. With reference to the proposed fresh outside look envisaged in the Secretary-General's previous report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, para. 104), the General Assembly, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 44/196 A took note of the intention of the Committee on Conferences to play a role in the review of the Department of Conference Services on the understanding that the role to be determined by the Committee at its 1990 session would be in full accordance with its mandate and in conformity with resolution 43/222 B.

Recommendation 35

152. The appropriations for consultants were, in rounded terms, $8.5 million in the biennium 1986-1987, $6.4 million in the biennium 1988-1989 and $7.1 million in the biennium 1990-1991. A reduction of 25 per cent was, therefore, achieved in 1988-1989, while recommendation 35 called for a reduction by 30 per cent. The slight increase of 10 per cent for the current biennium over the biennium 1988-1989 was made necessary by the need to implement mandated programmes and expanded activities with a smaller secretariat financed by the regular budget of the Organization. Regarding the second part of recommendation 35, the hiring of retired staff members as consultants is not a common practice. It cannot, however, be systematically excluded. The experience gained by retired staff members is one of the assets of the Organization, as the experience of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group has once again confirmed.

Recommendation 36

153. The recommendation that the Organization should pursue optimum utilization of space and should charge current commercial rates to Member States and other users occupying space in United Nations premises has been implemented. The rent structure for tenants on United Nations premises has been changed to reflect commercial rates as recommended. These rates are now in effect and are the basis of rental income projections for the biennium 1990-1991.

154 As a result of the implementation of this recommendation, the estimates of rental income in the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 reflect an increase of approximately $4 million over the corresponding 1988-1989 income. The increase results basically from the application of a policy whereby in New York specialized agencies, Member States and other users occupying space at United Nations premises are now charged commercial rates based on the highest rates paid by the United Nations for rented premises, that is, at 2 United Nations Plaza. In

Geneva the rates charged to organizations and offices occupying space at United Nations premises at locations other than the Palais have been increased to 70 per cent of the higher rate charged for office space at the Palais itself.

155. In the course of the current biennium, a global review of United Nations office space will be undertaken. In the context of this review, a determination of revised rental charges that may be charged to occupants not financed by the regular budget at Addis Ababa, Bangkok and Nairobi will be made. The possibility of obtaining additional reimbursement from extrabudgetary programmes for office accommodation will also be explored.

Recommendation 37

156. Paragraph (1) of recommendation 37, which called for a thorough review of the functions and working methods as well as of the policies of the Department of Public Information, can be considered implemented. The specific steps taken by the Secretary-General in implementation of this recommendation, which have been described in detail in his final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, paras. 110-130), included the submission to the General Assembly of proposed revisions to chapter 9 of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, extended through 1991, 19/ which were adopted by the General Assembly, as modified by the recommendations of CPC, 20/ in its resolution 43/219 of 21 December 1988.

157. Following a thorough review of the functions and working methods as well as of the policies of the Department of Public Information, the Secretary-General submitted his conclusions thereon to the General Assembly in the context of revised estimates for section 27 of the programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 (A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, chap. IV, sect. D).

158. As a result of reviews of those proposals by CPC, the Committee on Information, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee, and in the light of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Secretary-General submitted further modifications to the structure of the Department in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. 21/ Those modifications related in particular to the denomination and responsibilities of certain organizational units within the Communications and Project Management Division and the Information Products Division, as well as to the need to provide a simplified management structure for the Department, as called for in, among others, recommendation 40. The further modifications included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, in particular the elimination of the Bureau of Programme Operations and the Division for Committee Liaison and Administrative Services, and the subsequent transfer of part of their functions to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, were also necessitated by the decision - as part of the implementation of recommendation 15 - to reduce by one the number of Director (D-2) posts in the Department. The proposals of the Secretary-General in this regard were approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/202 A and have now been put into effect.

159. During this process of restructuring, the Department has discharged its mandate without any major negative impact on programme delivery. With the revised organizational structure now in place, it is expected that the full benefit of the reforms will be felt in the course of the current biennium, in the sense of improved efficiency, productivity and effectiveness.

160. Paragraph (2) of recommendation 37, which called for the consolidation in the Department of Public Information, to the extent possible, of information activities currently conducted by several departments and offices in the Secretariat, is still under consideration by the Secretary-General.

161. In a related report to the General Assembly (A/43/651), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, while recognizing the constraints involved in consolidating public information activities, stated that efforts to do so must continue and urged that the further review referred to by the Secretary-General be undertaken no later than 1992. The General Assembly, in paragraph 17 of its resolution 43/213, invited the Secretary-General to implement recommendation 37 in accordance with, inter alia, the comments and observations of the Advisory Committee (ibid., paras. 40-60).

162. A preliminary study was conducted to examine the feasibility of consolidating all existing public information activities within the Department of Public Information and the extent to which such consolidation would contribute to improving the efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of public information activities in the Secretariat. The results of the study were submitted to the Committee on Information at its eleventh session in 1989 (A/AC.198/1989/8). The study indicated that offices other than the Department devoted some 432 work-months annually to activities considered strictly public information work. It also noted that such activities are dispersed among the regional commissions and various departments located at different duty stations, a factor which did not facilitate the close collaboration necessary to achieving timely and effective public information about the work of those offices. In the light of those and other constraints, the study recommended that a further review be made once the then planned reforms of the Department were fully in place in 1992.

163. Paragraph (3) of recommendation 37 called for a review of the functions and activities of the United Nations information centres and, to the extent that the quality of public information activities would not be hampered, the consolidation of such centres with other existing United Nations offices. The Secretary-General, in agreement with the Administrator of UNDP, decided to consolidate the United Nations information centres with the offices of the resident co-ordinators/resident representatives, wherever that was not already the case and it could be shown that a joint arrangement would be more cost-effective while at the same time respecting programme delivery requirements. To this end, a provisional Understanding was approved by the Department of Public Information and UNDP in October 1989. It confirmed that, in countries where UNDP and the Department maintained separate offices, premises and facilities such as telecommunication links should be shared, although it was noted that many information centres received rent-free premises from host Governments and that they needed to be placed at centrally accessible and viable locations of the host city, close to the news media, universities,

non-governmental organizations and other visitors. The Understanding was to be evaluated after one year in the light of operational experience. The evaluation is in process and, while some modifications may be expected in regard to certain administrative arrangements, the basic elements related to the consolidation of premises remain valid. The Department and UNDP intend to pursue and, wherever possible, intensify their collaboration including, in particular, in duty stations where UNDP has offices but where no information centre exists. The close co-operation described above will no doubt contribute towards the objective of enhancing the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization at duty stations away from Headquarters.

Recommendation 38

164. This recommendation has been implemented. Appropriations for official travel were reduced by 21 per cent in real growth terms in the 1988-1989 programme budget, compared to the 1986-1987. A further reduction of 4.1 per cent from the 1988-1989 resource base was included in the Secretary-General's budget proposals for 1990-1991. The reductions were aimed principally at reducing the number of staff attending meetings and conferences. With respect to first-class travel, the Secretary-General continues to exercise his discretion in making exceptions on a case-by-base basis. Details of such exceptions are contained in annual reports to the General Assembly, most recently A/C.5/44/12.

Recommendation 39

165. The intent of recommendation 39, to ensure the independence of the internal audit function, was already achieved in the existing administrative arrangement whereby the Internal Audit Division was and continues to be a separate entity of the Department of Administration and Management conducting audits of Secretariat offices, activities and projects at Headquarters and other duty stations. Its audits are planned and carried out independently, and the resulting findings and recommendations are communicated directly by the Director of Internal Audit to the heads of the audited entities. As reported (A/42/234 and Corr.1, para. 7), should the need arise, the Director of Internal Audit can report directly to the Secretary-General in the latter's capacity as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization.

166. In accordance with generally accepted internal auditing standards, the independence of the audit function is achieved through its organizational status and the objectivity of its audits. It is the consistent policy of the Secretary-General to maintain the Internal Audit Division as an autonomous entity in the Department of Administration and Management to examine and appraise activities for which he has administrative responsibility. Its main goal is to assist programme managers achieve the economical, efficient and effective implementation of their programmes. The present organizational status of the Division ensures that the internal auditors are independent of the activities they audit. That allows them to carry out their work freely and objectively and permits them to render impartial and unbiased judgements. In carrying out their duties, the United Nations internal auditors have full, free and unrestricted access to all such activities and related records, property and personnel.

167. A self-evaluation exercise by the Division in 1989 reaffirmed that the present administrative arrangement ensured its independent and effective functioning. The review found also that the findings of an independent assessment in 1985 by an established accounting firm, acting as outside consultants, continued to be valid. The Division's staffing would have to be brought up to the strength demanded by the audit work-load generated by the growing volume of activities financed from extrabudgetary resources as well as under the regular budget. These activities include peace-making and peace-keeping operations, assisting and protecting refugees, implementing technical co-operation projects, protecting and preserving the environment and combating drug abuse.

168. The General Assembly, on the advice of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, has once again expressed its concern that the Division be equal to its task to give effective audit coverage of the extrabudgetary expenditures, which are currently above the annual level of the regular budget. Accordingly, efforts are under way to secure the extrabudgetary funds required to bring the staffing and associated resources of the Internal Audit Division to a level that would ensure effective audit coverage of all the extrabudgetary activities, particularly those that are carried out at duty stations outside Headquarters and at the country level.

Recommendation 40

169. Executive offices are, in a number of cases, directly attached to the offices of the head of department under the heading "Executive direction and management". In recent years, however, some executive offices have been consolidated in order to put several departments or offices under a common administration. The search for efficiency and the need for a close relationship between programmes and administration are two basic requirements that, at present, call for a variety of organizational arrangements.

IV. MEASURES REGARDING PERSONNEL

170. As indicated in the Secretary-General's final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, paras. 136-178) and in the present report in the context of recommendation 15 (see paras. 38-42 above), during the period under review, priority in the area of human resources management had to be accorded to a number of activities, some of which were not envisaged at the time that the Intergovernmental Group of High-level Experts submitted its report. In particular, the continuing financial crisis necessitated special measures to deal with the need to fill vacancies through redeployment. The implementation of the post reductions pursuant to recommendation 15 required significant time and staff resources in order to ensure an orderly and fair transition to new staffing levels in each office, as well as the development of procedures to redeploy staff whose posts were abolished. The staffing of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group and a number of other missions, as well as the filling of vacancies left by hundreds of staff assigned to those missions, stretched the resources of the Department of Administration and Management. Owing to these constraints, the implementation of the proposed reforms has thus been pursued as time and resources permitted. In those cases where implementation was not completed by the end of 1989, efforts will continue as outlined below.

Recommendation 41

171. The general result of the administrative streamlining of the Office of Human Resources Management, which was reported in detail in the Secretary-General's final report (ibid., para. 137), has been a marked improvement in co-ordination and efficiency. There is, however, an increasing need to strengthen the long-term policy formulation and human resources planning function. The project of centralizing information and planning activities under the direct supervision of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management needs to be revived and implemented.

Recommendation 42

172. The Secretary-General has made every effort to implement this recommendation as of the end of 1989. Chapters I, V, VI and X (and correlated provisions in other chapters) of the Staff Rules have been revised as recommended. The revisions were submitted to and approved by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. Work on other chapters is continuing.

173. A priority task for 1990 will be the incorporation of amendments required by the General Assembly's decisions on the comprehensive review of the conditions of service of the Professional category (see resolution 44/198, sect. I).

174. A personnel manual compiling instructions and directives for the application of the Staff Rules and Regulations has been produced and distributed to users world-wide and is being regularly updated. Work is progressing on the addition of sample rulings on interpretation of rules to serve as jurisprudence for decisions. Plans for a simplified, more easily usable manual have had to be deferred until staff resources for this project become available.

Recommendation 43

175. The recommendation to fill entry-level posts at the P-1 and P-2 levels through national competitive examinations has been implemented. The recommendation to fill posts at the P-3 level through competitive examinations has not been implemented owing to lack of resources and other exigencies related to retrenchment. The matter will be reviewed during the current biennium.

176. The recommendation that internal and external examinations be governed by the same standards and criteria has been implemented. The examination format is the same in both the external and internal examination, except that outside candidates are subject to a structured interview related to personal working experience. This interview is necessary because external candidates are not known to the Organization, whereas internal candidates have their records on file with the Organization. Admission criteria are the same, but factors that are specific to internal candidates such as length of service and performance records are taken into account. Implementation of the recommendation that a drafting test be used for filling posts at the P-4/P-5 levels has been postponed.

177. The result of the implementation has been positive. The national examinations are now organized on as wide a geographical basis as possible. In 1988, for example, 10 Member States, including 7 under-represented Member States, participated in national competitive examinations. In 1989, 10 Member States participated, including 4 under-represented Member States. Examinations are also planned for at least 10 Member States in 1990, possibly including 2 unrepresented and 5 under-represented Member States. As a result, geographical distribution was improved. In addition to enhanced geographical representation, the proportion of women successful in these examinations has increased each year.

Recommendation 44

178. The recommendation calling for an increase in the proportion of appointments at junior Professional levels (P-1 to P-3) has been implemented. The figures of appointments by levels since 1986 are as follows:

Appointments in the Professional category

	P-1 to P-3	All other levels
1989	111 (66.5 per cent)	56 (33.5 per cent)
1988	36 (55.0 per cent)	30 (45.0 per cent)
1987	25 (51.0 per cent)	24 (49.0 per cent)
1986	104 (55.0 per cent)	84 (45.0 per cent)

179. As the average age range of appointments at the P-1 to P-3 levels is 25 to 40, a higher percentage of appointments at these levels would bring down the age average of Professional staff and thus contribute to the rejuvenation of the Secretariat.

Recommendation 45

180. In his final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, para. 145), the Secretary-General reported that the recommendation that staff be considered for permanent appointment after three years of service must await the completion of the retrenchment exercise.

181. By section IV, paragraph 5 of its resolution 37/126, the General Assembly decided that staff members on fixed-term appointments should be given every reasonable consideration for a career appointment upon completion of five years of continuing good service. By section VI, paragraph 5 of its resolution 38/232, the Assembly recommended that organizations normally dispense with the requirement for a probationary appointment as a prerequisite for a career appointment following a period of five years of satisfactory service on fixed-term appointments.

182. In the context of recommendation 45, the Secretary-General would propose to dispense in appropriate cases with the requirement for a probationary appointment as a prerequisite for permanent appointment following a period of three years of entirely satisfactory service.

Recommendation 46

183. The recommendation to appoint more women, particularly at the higher levels, requires continued implementation. In addition to the 51 special measures to improve the status of women in the Secretariat referred to in the Secretary-General's final report (ibid., para. 146), the Office of Human Resources Management has adopted further measures to be implemented in 1990 with a view to achieving the goal of 30 per cent representation of women in the Professional category by the end of 1990. A rigorous monitoring system of efforts to attain this goal is in place. Special attention will be paid to appointments of women at the senior level. Successful implementation of these measures requires collaboration of the Member States.

184. While the continued implementation of this recommendation leads to the improvement in morale of the Secretariat, more effort is still needed to achieve a better balance at the higher levels. The need to recruit more women will have an effect on the number of projected vacancies available for the upward mobility of internal staff.

Recommendation 47

185. The Secretary-General has been making every effort to ensure that nationals of developing countries are duly represented at the senior levels. In 1989, 25 per cent of appointments at the D-1 level and above were of nationals from developing countries. The representation of developing countries at senior levels has evolved as follows:

Level	31 Dec. 1986		31 Dec. 1987		31 Dec. 1988		31 Dec. 1989	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
D-1 and above	177	49.2	172	47.4	165	48.0	178	48.1
D-2 and above	64	47.4	63	47.7	61	46.2	58	45.0
ASG and above	28	50.9	23	50.0	21	47.7	21	48.8

Recommendation 48

186. The recommendation to recruit staff members on the basis of occupational groups is being implemented. By introducing the concept of occupational groups for both the Professional and General Service categories, career development prospects of staff members have been broadened. Movement between departments and duty stations has been facilitated. As a whole, careers in which staff members broaden their knowledge and experience and acquire additional skills by changing jobs are more rewarding for both the individual and the Organization than careers in which staff members remain in only one job and in one occupation. A career development handbook for the General Service staff at Headquarters has been prepared by the Office of Human Resources and Management and is expected to be published shortly. This handbook introduces the concept of career paths which is based on the concept of occupational groups. A handbook for Professional staff, which is in a conceptual stage, will also be based on these concepts.

Recommendation 49

187. The Vacancy Management and Staff Redeployment Programme is working as a mechanism for rotation by encouraging staff to move between duty stations. Special rotation schemes for specific occupational areas (language services, administration and personnel) are being considered. The mobility incentive scheme that will come into effect on 1 July 1990 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/198 is likely to further encourage movement of staff away from Headquarters duty stations. It is envisaged that the recommendation to develop a job rotation system among the various duty stations for staff members in the Professional category will be implemented during the current biennium.

Recommendation 50

188. This recommendation is being implemented through the development of a new system of performance evaluation that will be pilot-tested in 1990 and, after appropriate staff-management consultations, introduced in 1991. It includes an overall numerical rating that will permit direct comparison in the rating of staff.

Recommendation 51

189. Promotion procedures are an integral part of the vacancy management system, and they are being further developed and refined through appropriate staff-management consultations. The structure, functions and composition of the appointment and promotion bodies were reviewed in early 1990 in consultation with staff associations with the intention of securing impartiality and objectivity in the management of appointments and promotions, and at the same time ensuring a balance between a healthy turnover in the memberships and a degree of continuity in the criteria and practices of those bodies. It was agreed, inter alia, that a number of nominees sufficiently greater than those required would be sought to facilitate consultations on the composition of the appointment and promotion bodies; that the maximum tenure of their members would be between three and five years and that whenever possible one third of the membership would be retained from year to year; and that standardized rules of procedure would be established to be adopted with flexibility by each body.

Recommendation 52

190. The mandatory age of retirement is normally applied through the strict observance of the guidelines emanating from General Assembly resolutions. An exception was instituted in 1989 to facilitate the extension of female staff members beyond retirement age in cases where the prospective retiree's office is understaffed. By its resolution 44/185 D of 19 December 1989, the Assembly raised the mandatory age of separation for staff members appointed on or after 1 January 1990 to 62.

Recommendations 53 and 61

191. The International Civil Service Commission noted in its annual report for the year 1987 22/ that it did not accept the premises on which recommendations 53 and 61 were based. With respect to recommendation 53, the Commission considered that there was no need to modify the mandate of the Commission since responsibilities for establishing personnel standards and monitoring their implementation were clearly set out in its statute, in particular articles 1, 9, 13, 14 and 17.

192. With regard to recommendation 61, the Commission was of the view that the Intergovernmental Group of High-level Experts had not given a basis or rationale for its assertion and that its claim did not appear to be valid. 23/ As a result of the comprehensive review of the conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories, carried out in 1989, at the request of the General Assembly, the Commission reached the opposite conclusion, namely, that the remuneration had fallen to the point that recruitment and retention were becoming a problem for the Organization. 24/ The outcome of the Commission's recommendations on the comprehensive review and its endorsement by the General Assembly are reflected in resolution 44/198, section I.

193. With respect to the more specific part of recommendation 61 concerning the education grant for post-secondary studies and the annual leave system, the Commission recommended that entitlements should remain unchanged. 25/

Recommendation 54

194. The situation with respect to this recommendation concerning the length of service in the leadership of departments and offices in the Secretariat remains as reported in the Secretary-General's final report (A/44/222 and Corr.1, paras. 162-163). It is taken into account by the Secretary-General when appointments or extensions of appointments are being considered at the Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General levels.

Recommendation 55

195. This recommendation, requesting the Secretary-General to ensure the faithful observance of the principle set out in Assembly resolution 35/210 that "no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States" is being duly taken into consideration in appointments of new staff members.

Recommendation 56

196. In the context of the implementation of recommendation 15, revised staffing tables, effective 1990, were approved by the General Assembly at its forty-third session in the context of its resolution 43/218 A (see also A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, chap. I). These new staffing tables will serve as a basis for the recruitment and placement of staff during the biennium 1990-1991. Staffing tables will of course continue to be reviewed in the context of future proposed programme budgets.

197. Furthermore, under the provisions of the vacancy management system, all posts that become vacant must be reviewed by the substantive department and by the Office of Human Resources Management before a decision is taken as to whether a vacant post should be filled, either by internal movement or external recruitment, as appropriate.

Recommendation 57

198. The ratio between staff with permanent appointments and those with fixed-term appointments is constantly monitored and reported on annually to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General.

199. In compliance with section IV, paragraph 5, of General Assembly resolution 37/126, upon completion of five years of continuing good service on fixed-term appointment all staff members are being given every reasonable consideration for a career appointment.

200. With effect from 1988, the Secretary-General decided that all candidates who successfully passed the national competitive examinations would, upon recruitment, be granted probationary appointments, a first step towards career status. Additionally, some countries have given notice that their nationals are henceforth free to apply for employment directly to the United Nations and seek career appointments from the United Nations. These developments will ensure a more adequate range between permanent staff members and staff members on fixed-term appointments, and will reflect more faithfully the principle of equitable geographical distribution among both categories of staff.

Recommendation 58

201. As indicated in his previous reports, the Secretary-General attaches high priority to training programmes geared to meet the changing needs of the Organization. Given the rapidly changing environment and the new demands being made and likely to be made in the future on the United Nations by its Member States, the Organization is not able to subscribe to a narrow definition of training programmes. The General Assembly itself has recognized the broader meaning of training in its annual and systematic support for language training, which aims at increasing the linguistic balance in the Secretariat and to which two thirds of all training funds are dedicated.

202. In a broad sense, a paramount need of the Organization is to have a staff equipped with the skills and knowledge required to carry out effectively the Organization's current as well as foreseeable mandates. The concept of an international civil service implies that a significant number of staff will spend a large portion of their careers in the Organization. Although at the time of recruitment staff are expected to meet the highest standards of competence, it can and should not be assumed that the knowledge and skills they possess when entering will adequately equip them for years of service in an Organization. This is particularly true in today's world where rapid changes in the political, social and economic environment constantly present the Organization with new challenges. Other organizations have recognized this fact from their inception. In recent

years, certain organizations within the United Nations system have been addressing this problem, with, indicatively, UNICEF contributing 2.4 per cent of its regular budget to its training programmes. By comparison, the United Nations in its 1990-1991 budget devotes 0.46 per cent to its training budgets. As indicated above, two thirds of this sum is in support of the language programme.

203. Beyond language training, by necessity, because of the limited availability of funds, programmes have been concentrated on meeting urgent needs of the Organization as defined by departments. A needs analysis was completed in 1988 and systematic training in the three top priorities thus identified, office automation, basic supervision, and drafting for specific occupational applications, have absorbed the majority of training resources.

204. However, the Organization fully supports the need to evaluate the impact and usefulness of its training programmes and is developing, as part of workshops sponsored by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, evaluation tools that will enable it to monitor the optimum utilization of allocated resources.

Recommendation 59

205. As stated in previous reports, staff-management machinery is in place at all duty stations and the consultation process has, as a whole, been working reasonably well. As the Secretary-General has repeatedly stated, the staff is the Organization's principal asset. During the past three years, a period of rapid change, retrenchment and restructuring, staff-management consultations have been especially important.

206. Regulation 8.1 of the Staff Regulations requires that "the Secretary-General shall establish and maintain continuous contact and communication with the staff in order to ensure the effective participation of the staff in identifying, examining and resolving issues relating to staff welfare, including conditions of work, general conditions of life and other personnel policies". The same regulation provides that related staff representative bodies shall be established. The Secretary-General is also required to create joint staff-management machinery at local and Secretariat-wide levels to advise him on these matters. The consultation process enables staff views to be sought and considered before management decisions are taken on matters affecting staff interests and concerns.

207. Within the framework of the Staff Regulations, the requirements for the staff management consultative process have evolved over the years, but have not always been explicitly defined and/or budgeted. Furthermore, some developments in this area have not been reflected in the relevant staff rules. With a view to redressing this situation, a number of steps were initiated and partially implemented during the period under review.

208. As part of the reform process, a review of chapter VIII of the Staff Rules was initiated. This review will take into account the administrative instructions that provide additional guidelines on staff-management issues and attempt to consolidate texts regulating staff-management relations.

209. The Secretary-General has always been of the view that the cost of staff representation activities is to be included in his proposed programme budget and that, once the budget is approved, the provisions of the Administrative Instruction ST/AI/293 of 15 May 1982 outlining facilities to be provided to staff representatives in the performance of their functions must be made effective. In order to define the level of current requirements and to endeavour to fulfil them appropriately, a review of the requirements for staff-management activities was initiated in 1989 in consultation with the staff and discussed by the Secretariat-wide Staff-Management Co-ordination Committee at its fourteenth session (8-14 March 1990). It is envisaged that this review, which is expected to be completed in 1991 after further discussions in the Committee, will result in a more coherent, transparent and cost-effective framework for staff-management activities.

Recommendation 60

210. This recommendation concerning the need to render the internal justice system more efficient and less costly has been implemented. In his comprehensive report on the revised internal justice system submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session (A/C.5/44/9), the Secretary-General outlined improvements made in the appellate machinery, the disciplinary area and the informal settlement of grievances. The General Assembly welcomed the progress made in its resolution 44/185 B of 19 December 1989.

211. The internal appeals procedures have been streamlined and a newly established Joint Appeals Board at Headquarters, fully representative of the Secretariat, has adopted internal rules of procedure, enforcing the strict observance of time-limits and ensuring the expeditious consideration of appeals. Reports of the Board are now submitted directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management who, since 1988, has assumed direct responsibility for the administration of justice. The application of the Secretary-General's policy of accepting unanimous recommendations of the Board, provided they do not impinge on major questions of law or principle, results in a prompt final decision on appeals.

212. The consistent application of streamlined procedures has led to the elimination of a long-standing backlog of appeals. The caseload of pending cases before the Headquarters Board has been reduced from 95 in 1985 to 30 in December 1989, the lowest number of cases pending before the Board in 18 years. Such improvement is especially significant in view of the fact that during the 1980s the number of new appeals filed annually is virtually double the number filed in the previous decade. The average time of cases pending before the Board has been reduced from over two years to four months. The Boards at Nairobi and Vienna have disposed of all pending cases and the Board at Geneva is expected to complete consideration of the majority of cases in 1990. The improved procedures should contribute to a restoration of confidence by the staff in an effective redress system.

213. In respect of disciplinary matters, the Secretary-General has, after extensive consultations with staff representative bodies at the major duty stations, promulgated a fully revised set of disciplinary rules which replaced chapter X of the Staff Rules, effective 1 January 1990. The revised rules, inter alia,

strengthen due process safeguards, including the entitlement of staff charged with misconduct, both in the field and at Headquarters, to consideration of their cases by a Joint Disciplinary Committee, introduce greater flexibility regarding the range of disciplinary measures, thereby permitting closer proportionality between the gravity of the misconduct and the sanction imposed, and expedite consideration and disciplinary action in cases of fraud.

214. A new Joint Disciplinary Committee has been established at Headquarters with an extended membership, fully representative of the Secretariat, to deal with the increased number of disciplinary cases.

215. An assessment of the impact of the revised substantive and procedural aspects of the disciplinary process, effective 1 January 1990, will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, as requested in resolution 44/185 B.

216. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/44/9), it is his intention to follow up reforms in the appellate and disciplinary areas with improvements in the informal procedures for the amicable resolution of staff grievances. Cost-effective informal settlement of disputes has been achieved through the intervention of grievance panels at Headquarters and other duty stations as well as through the assistance of members of the Panel of Counsel who assist staff members in preparing appeals and provide counselling with a view to obviating the need for formal litigation. In accordance with resolution 44/185 B, the Secretary-General will also report to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session on improvements in such informal procedures.

217. In order to assess closely the effectiveness in the light of practical experience, it will be necessary to monitor closely the implementation of the revised rules and procedures. To this end, consultations will continue with staff representatives. At the fourteenth session of the Staff-Management Co-ordination Committee (8-14 March 1990), the administration agreed to a proposal from the staff to establish a working group within the context of the New York Joint Advisory Committee to address problems related to the administration of justice.

Recommendation 61

218. This recommendation has been treated with recommendation 53 (see paras. 191-193).

Recommendation 62

219. The practice of transferring extrabudgetary posts to the regular budget continues to be discouraged. No such transfers were proposed in the proposed programme budget for the bienniums 1988-1989 and 1990-1991. In respect of the latter, an exchange of posts between the regular budget and the voluntary funds of UNHCR was proposed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly. This resulted in no net additional posts to the regular budget.

V. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

Recommendation 63

220. Recent work programmes of the Joint Inspection Unit have been redesigned in form and substance to give Member States a clear sense of the overall thrust of those programmes and a better initial understanding of the individual studies contained therein. By extending the time frame of the work programmes from one to three years the Unit gives advance notice of forthcoming studies, thereby providing an opportunity for early comment on the evaluation content of the work programme. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 44/184 of 19 December 1989, requested the Unit to give even greater attention to management, budgetary and administrative issues.

221. The General Assembly has not yet found it convenient to deal with the name change of the Unit.

222. The Joint Inspection Unit is in full accord with recommendation 63 and its enhanced emphasis on the evaluation aspects of its work. As the General Assembly was informed in the Unit's nineteenth annual report, 26/ the Unit has introduced two new features into its work programme, namely, to identify those studies which are evaluative and to provide advance notice of studies that the Unit plans to undertake in the coming two years. This latter information is meant to encourage Member States to comment, inter alia, on the evaluation content of the work programme so that the Unit may make adjustments as necessary. The Unit believes that its recent work programmes respond positively to recommendation 63 and to the general concerns of Member States concerning evaluation. Nevertheless, as the Unit has recognized in its twentieth annual report, 27/ addressing the evaluation process is a long-term task. Advising organizations on their methods for internal evaluation is an objective whose fulfilment will be achieved over time through consultations with the participating organizations during the process of the annual development of the Unit's work programme.

Recommendation 64

223. This recommendation was addressed to Member States. In paragraph 13 of its resolution 43/221 of 21 December 1988, the General Assembly underlined the importance of applying the highest standards in selecting candidates for appointment as inspectors, as stipulated in chapter 2 of the statute of the Unit, and of giving special emphasis to experience in national or international administrative and financial matters, including management questions, and, where possible, knowledge of the United Nations or other international organizations. In paragraph 14 of the resolution, the Assembly also underlined the importance of the consultation process for reviewing the qualifications of the proposed candidates in accordance with article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Unit.

Recommendation 65

224. This recommendation was also addressed to the General Assembly. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 44/184, the General Assembly requested the Joint Inspection Unit, in the development of its work programme, to give even greater attention to management, budgeting and administrative issues relevant to the agendas of the governing bodies of its participating organizations and to their main and common concerns.

Recommendation 66

225. The reports of the Unit have always been made available to Member States. They are circulated as General Assembly documents or, in a limited number of cases, at the request of the Unit, as Economic and Social Council documents. Comments of the Secretary-General and/or ACC on the reports are also submitted, where appropriate, to those bodies. Furthermore, the Secretary-General in his annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of recommendations of the Unit outlines the action taken by the Organization pursuant to the Unit's report.

Recommendation 67

226. The Panel of External Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit have continued to give great importance to an increased co-operation between the two bodies. The measures that were adopted at their joint meetings in 1986 and 1987 have proved to work towards this end. As a result, inspectors and external auditors maintain contact at the working level when particular studies are to be carried out or are under way. Reports issued by both bodies are mutually exchanged and in cases where reports of the Unit cover areas that have been examined and/or reviewed by external auditors, they are requested to provide their views before the reports are finalized. The Executive Secretaries of the Panel and of the Unit maintain contact with each other throughout the year and discuss matters of mutual interest on behalf of the two bodies. Other measures adopted by the Panel and the Unit include the exchange of work programmes on a regular basis and the reinforcement of recommendations of one service by the other whenever investigations lead to similar conclusions.

227. At its regular session in November 1989, the Panel of External Auditors decided to start issuing good practice guides for use by its members in their examinations of specific areas of management. It was felt that the Panel had already recognized the need to develop a common approach by the issuance of audit guidelines that provide statements of best practice for the conduct of audits, and that there might be considerable additional benefit obtained if audits of management topics could also be conducted on a broadly common basis. The Panel considered that an area where joint efforts and co-operation between the Unit and the Panel is of mutual benefit. Steps are being taken by the Panel to co-ordinate with the Unit the preparation and issuance of good practice guides.

228. The request that external auditors should put greater emphasis on management audits and other areas of importance, as required by the legislative organs, concerned, has been given special attention by the external auditors who have

substantially increased their work in the area of value-for-money audits, as requested by the General Assembly and legislative bodies of the different organizations of the United Nations system. The findings in the areas of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the administration of those organizations have been regularly reported and will continue to be included in the external auditors' reports.

VI. PLANNING AND BUDGET PROCEDURE

229. In section VI of its report, the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts made a critical assessment of the planning and budget procedures of the United Nations. It stated that the medium-term plan, the programme budget, the monitoring and the evaluation systems were meant to constitute an integrated process through which wide agreement should evolve on activities that should be financed by the regular budget of the Organization. 28/ The introduction to the medium-term plan did not actually permit a constructive dialogue among Member States on the policy orientations of the plan. The plan itself did not properly reflect goals, objectives and policies that could be transformed into action through resource allocation and the setting of priorities in the programme budget. 29/ Priority setting, in both the plan and the programme budget, was not done in conformity with the existing regulations and rules. The programme budget was nothing more than "the financial compilation of a number of decisions and recommendations taken by a large number of intergovernmental bodies and interpreted in the various departments and divisions of the Secretariat". 30/ Furthermore, throughout the planning and budgeting process, Member States were not in a position to intervene early enough and to make significant changes in the activities of the Organization. The Group of Experts added that the medium-term plan and the programme budget should and did not currently have "the necessary flexibility so that priorities and resources could be adjusted to the changing international circumstances and the new challenges and problems that might arise". 31/ These deficiencies should be rectified and planning and budget procedures should be developed to "facilitate agreement among Member States on the content and level of the budget of the Organization". 30/

230. The programming and budgeting procedures thus analysed by the Group had been progressively developed since the beginning of the 1970s. The General Assembly, in resolution 3043 (XXVII) of 19 December 1972, approved on an experimental basis the introduction of a biennial budget cycle. In resolution 3195 (XXVIII) A to C of 18 December 1973, the Assembly adopted the first programme budget of the Organization, which was for the biennium 1974-1975. That same year, the Assembly considered the first medium-term plan, covering the period 1974-1977. Subsequently, regulations and rules on programme planning, the programme aspects of the budget, the monitoring of implementation and the methods of evaluation were progressively developed and codified by the Assembly in its resolution 37/234 of 21 December 1982.

231. The Group of Experts did not question the validity of those instruments nor their evolutive character. Rather, it asserted that they were not properly used and that the regulations and rules were often ignored or insufficiently applied.

Hence it adopted recommendation 68 on priority setting, in which the Group stressed that the pertinent rules and regulations should be strictly applied by the intergovernmental bodies concerned and by the Secretariat. The same recommendation 68 stipulates that CPC should monitor this question of priority setting and report thereon to the General Assembly. Besides this, the Group of Experts did not formulate other recommendations on the planning and budget procedure. It indicated three different groups of proposals that were focused on the respective roles of CPC and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and in which views were expressed on an outline, a contingency fund and the need for consensus on budgetary matters.

232. The Fifth Committee considered these questions in 1986 and, in its report to the General Assembly (A/41/795), endorsed recommendation 68 on full application of regulations and rules for priority setting and also the basic aspects of a reform of the planning, programming and budgeting process, that is, a greater, earlier and more structured involvement of Member States in this process, an outline containing, inter alia, an indication of the overall level of resources to accommodate the activities of the Organization during the following biennium, and a contingency fund. The Fifth Committee, however, listed a number of points to be resolved, namely, the decision-making process, the intergovernmental machinery, the definition of "add-ons", and the basis for determining the level of resources in the outline. Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted resolution 41/213, section II of which provides the main elements for improving the planning, programming and budgeting process. Its annex I contains the new elements that should govern budget preparation.

233. The implementation of recommendation 68 and of the relevant provisions of resolution 41/213 can be briefly described under the following headings: consultative process, priority-setting, outline and contingency fund.

A. Consultative process

234. With regard to the medium-term plan, Member States considered in the fall of 1987 some perspectives of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations in the next decade, intended to provide a framework for the preparation of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/42/512). They were invited, through a note verbale, to provide written comments on these perspectives. Member States then considered in 1988 a draft introduction of the same plan, together with proposals on its structure (A/43/329). A calendar of consultations of functional, regional and sectoral intergovernmental bodies on the various chapters of the plan was also submitted to CPC and to the General Assembly in 1988 (A/43/626). Such consultations occurred during the course of 1989, within the constraints of the schedule of the meetings of intergovernmental bodies. Thus, the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and its introduction (A/45/6), to be adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, upon recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, CPC and the Economic and Social Council, will have been the subject of extensive consultations.

235. Intergovernmental bodies had the opportunity in 1988 and 1989 to give comments to the Secretariat on the programmes of work upon which the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 was built. The first report of the Advisory Committee on this programme budget provided a summary of these consultations and suggested that they were of uneven intensity and quality. 32/ CPC made similar observations and the General Assembly, in section I of its resolution 44/194 on programme planning, underlined the need for a more effective role of functional, regional and sectoral intergovernmental bodies in the planning, programming and budgeting process. The Secretary-General indeed believes that the preparation of both the medium-term plan and the programme budget would benefit from a greater involvement of specialized intergovernmental bodies. Obstacles to overcome are, however, extremely severe. They pertain to the complexity of scheduling meetings in relation with several constraints and objectives, as well as to the difficulty, for Member States and within the Secretariat, to develop and share a common language on matters of programming and budgeting.

B. Priority setting

236. According to the current legislation, the introduction to the medium-term plan should have priorities proposed by the Secretary-General; the medium-term plan itself should include priorities among subprogrammes; the outline should contain priorities reflecting trends of a broad sectoral nature; and the programme budget should have, within each programme, priorities among programme elements. In addition, the use of the contingency fund and the deferral or suppression of activities that could not be financed from it are linked to priority setting. The practical and political difficulties of setting priorities are commensurate with the neatness of this theoretical framework. A report of the Secretary-General (A/44/272) outlining all aspects of priority setting in future outlines of the proposed programme budget was presented to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session and is still under discussion this year. The question of the impact of extrabudgetary resources on activities with a high or low priority designation will receive increased attention. The proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (see A/45/6) demonstrates some improvement in the capacity of the Organization to identify subprogrammes with high priority. In the coming years, efforts to implement more strictly the pertinent regulations and mandates should be accompanied by further reflection on the notion of priority and of its practical application.

C. Outline of the programme budget

237. In accordance with resolution 41/213 an outline of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 was presented by the Secretary-General in August 1988 (A/43/524). Upon recommendations from CPC and the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/214 of 21 December 1988, in which it reaffirmed the basic rationale for this new feature of the budgetary process and recognized that its methodology required further improvement and that the whole exercise should be applied with flexibility. It also decided on a preliminary estimate to be used by the Secretary-General as a basis for preparing his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

238. The need for improvement in the format and methodology of both the programme budget and the outline was stressed again by the Assembly by its resolution 44/200 on the implementation of resolution 41/213. A proposed outline for the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 will be considered by the Assembly at its forty-fifth session, on the basis of the recommendations of CPC and the Advisory Committee.

D. Contingency fund

239. Also in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 41/213 a report of the Secretary-General (A/42/225 and Add.1), entitled "Questions relating to the programme budget: inflation and currency fluctuation, and the level of contingency fund", was presented to the General Assembly at its forty-second session in 1987. In its resolution 42/211, on the implementation of resolution 41/213, the Assembly approved guidelines for the contingency fund, with respect to criteria for use, period covered and pattern of use, and operation of the fund. Several reports were subsequently presented, and in December 1988, in paragraph 6 of its resolution 43/214, the Assembly decided that the contingency fund of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 should be established at a level of 0.75 per cent of the preliminary estimate (given by the outline) i.e., $15 million, should be appropriated as needed and should be used according to the purpose and procedures set out in the annexes to its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 and relevant regulations and rules. When considering and adopting one year later the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, the General Assembly decided on the use of a portion of this contingency fund on the basis of statements of programme budget implications for activities which were not programmed in the budget. The use and operation of the contingency fund will be reviewed by the General Assembly in 1991.

240. It should be noted that, apart from the contingency fund, the request of the General Assembly to find a comprehensive solution to the problem of all additional expenditures, including those deriving from inflation and currency fluctuation, has yet to be met. The established procedures, that is, the annual recosting of estimates, have been maintained and the search for a different solution remains on the agenda of the Assembly.

241. Since the adoption by the Assembly of resolution 41/213, the trend towards the adoption of decisions on budgetary matters by consensus has been very evident, culminating in the adoption by consensus of the programme budget of the Organization for the biennium 1990-1991. Thus, the fundamental objective of the reform in this domain, that is, to facilitate agreement among Member States on the content and level of the budget of the Organization, has been achieved. The new instruments put into place will evolve with experience. Continuous efforts on the part of Member States and of the Secretariat will be needed to ensure that the new planning, programming and budgeting process responds appropriately to the ever-changing role and mandates of the Organization.

VII. ASSESSMENT

242. In order to provide a general critical assessment of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 in the light of the objectives of that resolution, namely, the enhancement of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization, it is necessary to recall the circumstances leading to the adoption by the Assembly of resolution 40/237 of 18 December 1985 establishing the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts. In 1985, two seemingly contradictory situations co-existed. On the one hand, the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization gave Member States an opportunity to reaffirm faith in its fundamental principles and objectives. On the other hand, the United Nations was facing one of the most difficult phases in its history. A severe financial crisis posed an immediate threat not only to its financial solvency, but to its very integrity. Not unconnected with this menacing financial situation, and no less detrimental to the future of the Organization, was a widespread feeling of malaise regarding its effectiveness and efficiency, resulting, not least, from sharp differences among the membership, in particular, among the major Powers. This perception was especially pronounced on the part of some of the major contributors to the United Nations budget and, in particular, in the Government of the major contributor. The majority of Member States, however, while in agreement to some extent with the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization, were of the view that the activities of the Organization were suffering from a lack of political will on the part of the major contributors.

243. The withholding of financial contributions and the linkage of this withholding to, inter alia, the demand for financial and administrative reforms heightened the atmosphere of suspicion surrounding the consultations prior to the adoption of resolution 40/237. The final text reflected a balance between the diverging views and objectives of the Member States. In the resolution the Assembly reiterated the principle of the sovereign equality of all States and emphasized that the improvement of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations was not an end in itself, but a means to attain the purposes and implement the principles of the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security and in the promotion of development and international co-operation.

244. This central interaction between diverse and sometimes fundamentally diverging objectives of Member States was carried into the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts and was present throughout its deliberations. The protracted debate on the recommendations emanating from the Group of Experts during the forty-first session of the General Assembly also reflected sharp divergence of views. The prolonged consultations on the report culminated in marathon sessions chaired by the President of the General Assembly himself, which went well beyond the target date for the adjournment of the forty-first session and which were crowned with agreement by consensus on what became resolution 41/213. The adoption of this resolution was in itself an important factor in setting the stage for a revival of confidence in the United Nations.

245. The recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts ranged from very broad, general proposals to detailed specific administrative

instructions. All reflected, to some extent, a set of political compromises. In view of the charged background, the underlying tensions during the work of the Group, and the short period given to it to complete its task, it was hardly surprising that the recommendations did not necessarily rest, in all cases, upon documented facts or scientific appraisals. Owing to their magnitude and complexity, economic and social activities of the Organization were identified as an area of particular importance requiring reform. In addition to the specific and general prescriptions concerning secretariat arrangements addressed to the Secretary-General, a Special Commission was set up by the Economic and Social Council to deal with the rationalization of the intergovernmental machinery. These two exercises are closely interrelated. After two years of negotiations, the Special Commission failed to reach agreement. Thus insufficient reform has taken place in the overall structure at either the intergovernmental or the secretariat level. Some progress has been made, however, in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of individual entities and in revitalizing the Economic and Social Council.

246. During the period under review, a solid consensus has emerged among Member States to the effect that the enhancement of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, important as it is, is not an end in itself but an essential means of enabling the Organization to carry out its varied tasks more efficiently. This consensus is a welcome departure from the previous atmosphere of sharp confrontation that dominated the initial debates on the subject of reform. It augurs well for the development of the United Nations and its continuing evolution in an ever-changing world.

247. Parallel with this development, the world has witnessed a remarkable improvement in the political climate at the global level. The state of East-West confrontation and tension that dominated international relations and adversely affected the work of the United Nations is coming to an end at a breathtaking pace. While it is difficult to predict with any certainty where these historic developments may lead, and certainly there will be challenges and pitfalls ahead, it is already clear that Member States are manifesting renewed confidence in the Organization and the increasing desire to enable it to deal effectively with the whole range of problems that confront the international community. There is evidence of a marked change for the better in the political climate at the United Nations. During the past session of the Assembly 215 resolutions (65 per cent of all resolutions) were adopted without a vote.

248. More directly relevant and significant in relation to the administrative and financial efficiency of the Organization is the fact that Governments of Member States are increasingly turning to the United Nations and entrusting the Secretary-General with functions that are extending the limits of past experience. Namibia, Central America, Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq, Western Sahara and Cambodia are cases in point. Indeed, mediation, good offices and the assistance of the United Nations are being sought as never before in its history. The achievements of United Nations peace-keeping forces have been recognized by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

249. Experience has shown that close working co-operation and mutual support between the Secretary-General and Member States is the corner-stone of success in all facets of United Nations activities. The Organization has witnessed in recent years a steady improvement in that direction and this trend needs to be carefully nurtured, deepened and widened. This development is clearly evident in the area of maintenance of international peace and security falling within the responsibility of the Security Council. The increasing number of new peace-keeping operations entrusted to the Secretary-General since 1988 is clear evidence of this growing and harmonious partnership. The decision-making process on political matters has, as the Secretary-General had occasion to state in his annual report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session, 33/ vastly improved, with daily co-operation between the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

250. In the administrative and financial areas, a satisfactory process of confidence building between Member States and the Secretariat is also emerging following the implementation of the new procedures adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213. The greater convergence of views on questions related to administration, budget and management was reflected in the adoption without a vote of all resolutions in the Fifth Committee during the forty-fourth session of the Assembly. The consensus votes on the revised estimates at the forty-third session and on the programme budget for 1990-1991 at the forty-fourth session of the Assembly are especially encouraging indications. The reforms in the budgetary process have thus gone through their first full cycle and, by and large, achieved their purposes. They have resulted in an increased consciousness among Member States and within the Secretariat about the way in which the United Nations spends its resources and encouraged a more effective use of available resources. They have also largely allayed the concerns of the major contributors.

251. In the area of human resources management, some of the recommendations are of an ongoing nature and their full effect will be felt in the future. In several areas, the capacity of the Secretariat to fulfil its tasks has been stretched to its maximum limits by the staff reductions. The mounting of four new peace-keeping operations (UNIIMOG, UNAVEM, UNTAG and ONUCA) in 1988-1989, as against 13 operations over the previous 40 years, and the planning of several others have stretched to the limit the human and financial resources of the Organization. In addition, under the regular budget, there was an increase in the number of special missions from two to four with the addition of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (now renamed the Office of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan) and the United Nations Mission to verify the electoral process in Nicaragua. Thus, including the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus, there were, at the end of 1989, a total of 11 peace-keeping missions in the field, compared with only 5 at the beginning of the biennium on 1 January 1988. The staff as a whole has responded to those challenges with extraordinary devotion to the Organization. During the entire reform period staff members have coped with the uncertainties and, in many cases, increased workloads in a spirit fully in conformity with the expressed aims of the reform process.

252. In this context, it must be recognized that the employment of the staff so as to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity is an obligation under the Charter. It is essential that the Organization provide staff with appropriate conditions of employment and guarantee their security. The Secretary-General attaches the highest priority to these objectives.

253. A practicable consensus on action required in the economic and social sectors has not yet emerged, in contrast to the progress achieved in the political, administrative and financial areas. The Secretary-General has been requested once again to submit proposals to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session, including recommendations for reforms in the intergovernmental sector. He intends to do so taking into account the results of a number of important meetings and deliberations taking place this year.

254. The difficulties inherent in achieving more adequate programming and co-ordination of the many agencies and programmes operating in the economic and social field are well known. The problem of maintaining a proper balance between growing operational activities of the various entities funded through extrabudgetary resources and their mandated programmes under the regular budget still remains to be addressed in full. At the Secretariat level the interrelationships between research and policy analysis and operational activities require further study.

255. With respect to intergovernmental machinery, experience has shown how difficult it is to overcome certain obstacles whenever reforms have been attempted. These stem from the persistent basic political divergence of views among Member States over priorities, over the role and decision-making powers of the various United Nations organs and over their functions in relation to other forums within the system, as well as the strong vested and often legitimate interests of influential constituencies. The subject of reform in the economic and social sector cannot be dealt with piecemeal or in a fragmented manner. What is needed, above all, is a fresh and courageous re-examination of positions and attitudes, particularly in the light of the momentous changes that are taking place in different parts of the world.

256. The Secretary-General believes that opportunity exists to extend to the economic and social spheres the same spirit of co-operation that has recently been harnessed to achieve positive results in the political field. It should be possible for Member States and the Secretary-General to forge the same level of mutual co-operation that has evolved in the political and administrative areas. The improved political climate and renewed confidence in multilateralism should enable Governments to use the United Nations as a more effective instrument for collective action to address areas of critical importance in the economic and social fields as well as to meet new challenges. The seriousness and urgency of the economic and social problems confronting the international community, and the developing countries in particular, render the role of the Secretariat in assisting Member States to consider economic and social issues in an integrated manner, in programme formulation, in setting of priorities and in enhancing co-ordination and coherence in the United Nations system, even more important. Decisions taken at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly reflect an increasing awareness by

Member States of the need for the United Nations to play an increasingly dynamic role in the economic and social field and a willingness to use the United Nations as an instrument for collective action to meet new challenges.

257. During the current year the Assembly has already held a special session to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs (seventeenth special session) and adopted a comprehensive programme aimed at combatting the international scourge of drug abuse (resolution S-17/2 of 23 February 1990). The special session of the Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries (eighteenth special session) has provided an opportunity to develop a new framework for international economic co-operation. Among the significant issues discussed were the implications of recent developments in countries of Eastern Europe, both in terms of the integration of their economies into the international economy and their potential enhanced contribution to the world-wide development process. The special session was an opportunity for focusing the North-South dialogue on new realities. The elaboration of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade is under way. The Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries is expected to address the problem of the widening economic gap between the developed and developing countries, in particular the least developed. The preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development has begun, setting in motion important negotiations among Member States that are essential for the success of the Conference in 1992. These multifaceted development issues engaging the attention of Member States are a clear manifestation of the fact that the United Nations is seen by many Member States, particularly the developing countries, as an important forum in which to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to the growing number of interconnected global issues. The United Nations is not only a universal organization but must also be concerned with the totality of the human condition on earth. Nowhere else can national policies, priorities and concerns come together, interact and forge a global consciousness as a foundation for comprehensive collective action, for the betterment of that condition.

258. In concluding, the Secretary-General is of the view that the lengthy political process that culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 41/213 and subsequent resolutions has largely achieved its purpose. The Organization received a mandate for reform to be implemented over a three-year period, which it has fulfilled to the best of its abilities. The mandate has been carried out without serious negative effects on programmes, but not without pain. Retrenchment has put considerable strain on several parts of the Secretariat, particularly in view of the fact that implementation of the reforms has had to be carried out during a period of continuing financial crisis and rising demands on the Organization. In a climate of renewed confidence in the capacity of the Organization, the reforms may be seen as a contributing factor in changing attitudes towards the United Nations and its ability to respond to new challenges. Today there is a greater and more effective use of the Organization's capabilities and the assistance of the United Nations is being sought by Member States in an unprecedented manner. There is a noticeable improvement in public perceptions of

the Organization as an institution for the resolution of conflict. On the basis of these objective criteria, it may be concluded that the ultimate purposes in the mind of the legislators, namely the enhancement of the overall effectiveness of the Organization, have been achieved.

259. While there may be different perceptions concerning details of the implementation of the reform process initiated by the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts, the Secretary-General is of the view that the time has come for the Organization to consolidate itself and to move forward into the last decade of the twentieth century on the basis of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (see A/45/6), which aims to ensure that the Organization will be capable of attaining the objectives of the Charter in relation to peace, security and sound development.

260. This is not to argue that the task is over. The financial viability of the Organization has yet to be restored. The revitalization of the economic and social sector has still to be addressed, taking into account decisions to be taken at the intergovernmental level. Further changes may be required to enable the Organization to adapt itself to respond fully and effectively to new and emerging issues. The goals and objectives of the Organization will be achieved only through recognition of the interdependence of Member States, the continuation of a partnership of confidence and trust between Member States and the Secretariat, and by the restoration of the financial viability of the Organization. The effectiveness of the United Nations system as a whole depends on timely and full payment by all Member States. The plans, programmes and budgets developed to meet the mandates and priorities of Member States can be translated into action only if they have solid financial support. As the Secretary-General has said frequently, reform is not a finite process, nor an end itself, but implies a constant review of the functioning of the Organization in relation to its objectives. The Secretary-General's commitment to administrative and financial effectiveness and efficiency will be maintained.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49).

2/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/44/1).

3/ Ibid., Supplement No. 32 and corrigenda (A/44/32 and Corr.1-3), annex III.

4/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 32 and corrigenda (A/44/32 and Corr.1-3), sect. IV.

5/ Ibid., para. 117.

6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/44/37), sect. II, decision 1 (X).

Notes (continued)

7/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

8/ Figures reflect meetings between September and the end of December.

9/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/42/16), part one, para. 260.

10/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/44/16), para. 329.

11/ Ibid., Supplement No. 6 (A/44/6).

12/ Of these 10,057 regular budget-funded posts, 9,959 are established and 98 are temporary. This staffing table of 10,057 posts does not include 24 posts which, although funded from the regular budget, are non-recurrent.

13/ A temporary post at the Assistant Secretary-General level, attached to the Conference on Disarmament, is not included in this staffing table. On the other hand, a post of Assistant Secretary-General was supressed after the adoption of resolution 41/213 but before the adoption of the programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989.

14/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/44/16), para. 223.

15/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1979 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. VII.

16/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/44/37).

17/ Ibid., Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/42/37), para. 142.

18/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/44/7 and Corr.1 and 2), para. 10.5.

19/ Ibid., Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/43/6).

20/ Ibid., Supplement No. 16 (A/43/16), part one, paras. 100-141.

21/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/44/6/Rev.1), sect. 27.

22/ Ibid., Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/42/30 and Corr.1),

Notes (continued)

23/ Ibid., para. 22.

24/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/44/30), vol. II, paras. 100-126.

25/ Ibid., Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/42/30 and Corr.1), para. 44 (b).

26/ Ibid., Supplement No. 34 (A/42/34), para. 9.

27/ Ibid., Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/43/34), para. 17.

28/ Ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49), para. 59.

29/ Ibid., para. 66.

30/ Ibid., para. 61.

31/ Ibid., para. 57.

32/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/44/7), para. 71.

33/ Ibid., Supplement No. 1 (A/44/1).

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Forty-fifth session
Items 12, 92, 99, 112 and 113 of the
preliminary list*
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL
EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED
NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING
OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT
TO SUCH INSTRUMENTS
POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES INVOLVING
YOUTH
TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR
DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT
ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE
ELECTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 20 April 1990 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have been instructed by my Government to draw your attention to the attached extract from Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1989, published by the Department of State of the United States of America, which contains information on the situation concerning human rights in Burkina Faso. I have underlined passages of special relevance.

In view of the importance of this information, I have the honour to request that this attached extract be issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 12, 92, 99, 112 and 113 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Johanan BEIN
Ambassador
Acting Permanent Representative

* A/45/50.

ANNEX*

101st Congress
2d Session

JOINT COMMITTEE PRINT

COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES FOR 1989

REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AND THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
U.S. SENATE

BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 116(d) AND 502B(b) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961, AS AMENDED

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* Underlining has been added by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations.

/...

BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso is ruled by a military regime headed by Captain Blaise Compaore, who took power from Thomas Sankara on October 15, 1987 in the country's fourth military coup since 1980. The new military regime continued the ban on political parties and activities and gave no indication that the country will return to constitutional rule. Instead, President Compaore moved to firm up a narrow political base by forming a "popular front" of various leftwing and centrist groups, military officers, and miscellaneous civilians to assist in running the Government. He has also formed a network of Revolutionary Committees (CR's), loosely organized at national, regional, and local levels, to mobilize the population and promote revolutionary goals.

The Burkina Faso armed forces number about 7,500 members, including 5,200 in the army, 100 in the air force, and 2,200 in the paramilitary gendarmerie and the police. All police and internal security forces are controlled by the Ministry of Defense.

Burkina Faso, one of the world's poorer countries, is overwhelmingly tied to subsistence agriculture, with 90 percent of the population living in rural areas. Agriculture is, however, highly vulnerable to fluctuations in rainfall. Frequent drought, lack of communications and other infrastructure, a low literacy rate, and a stagnant economy are all longstanding problems. The country has a per capita income of about $180 per year.

Human rights continued to be circumscribed in 1989. Problem areas were extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, mistreatment of detainees, and restrictions on press, speech, assembly, and the right of citizens to change their government through peaceful means. The Government did allow the establishment of a local human rights organization (which intervened in some specific cases), permitted some political groupings to form and distribute pamphlets discreetly, and released all political opponents held in prison.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Political and Other Extrajudicial Killing

Four members of the armed forces were summarily executed without trial in September 1989 after allegedly plotting a coup d'etat. The four were Minister of Defense Major Jean-Baptiste Lengani, Minister of Economic Promotion Captain Henri Zongo, the officer in charge of the communications unit, Captain Sabyamba Koundaba, and an unidentified bodyguard of the Minister of Defense. After the coup attempt of Christmas 1989, the Government made a point of denying rumors that 7 people had been executed and said all arrestees would receive trials.

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearance.

BURKINA FASO

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Torture and mistreatment of detainees have been persistent problems for a number of years. Amnesty International published a special report in 1988, "Burkina Faso, Political Imprisonment and the Use of Torture from 1983 to 1988," giving accounts of the imprisonment of political opponents and torture under the present and preceding governments. Police brutality continued in 1989, although there were fewer credible reports, usually involving severe beatings, often at the time of apprehension. A Catholic Church-sponsored organization has alleged that the police and gendarmerie beat and tortured at least 15 people arrested for political reasons in 1989. The Government denied that anyone has been tortured.

Prison conditions are poor, with most prisons holding double their design capacity, and are characterized by the lack of sufficient food, minimum hygiene, and medical support.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

There were continuing reports in 1989 of arbitrary arrest. The law permits preventive detention without charge for a maximum of 72 hours, renewable for a single 72-hour period in criminal cases. In practice, there are frequent violations of this restriction in cases involving both Burkinabe and foreign nationals, especially in political cases. Several schoolchildren, for example, were held in detention without charge for a number of months in 1988. In addition, in cases of emergency or national security, the military code, which provides for indefinite detention, overrides the civil code. Access to lawyers is not normally permitted in security cases, although it is provided for by law.

The Government detained several persons for political reasons during 1989, but by the end of the year all had been released, many within a few days of their arrest. Immediately following the discovery of the alleged coup plot on September 18, three or four government officials were arrested and held briefly for questioning. These persons were later released, but four others were summarily executed without trial. The Government also released a number of persons detained since the overthrow of the Sankara government in 1987, including former Interior Minister Ernest Nongria Ouedraogo. In this connection, 23 junior military personnel, detained at various times since Sankara's overthrow on suspicion of coup-plotting, were released August 4, 1989. An unknown number of people were arrested as a result of a coup attempt over Christmas 1989. Numbers rumored range from 5 to 30 prisoners, including military personnel. They were still being held at year's end, and the Government had provided no names or other information, despite requests.

Some intellectuals, ex-military officers, and former government officials remain in self-imposed exile abroad, partly due to fear for their safety should they return. Captain Boukary Kabore, leader of resistance at Koudougou airforce base against Compoare's coup in 1987, is now exiled in Ghana. He charged in 1989 that the popular front Government is attempting to liquidate all remaining Sankara loyalists. The Government has encouraged opponents of the Sankara regime to return home, but few have done so. Kabore stated in an interview in November that if he had the chance to seize power in Burkina, he would do so.

BURKINA FASO

With regard to forced or compulsory labor, see Section 6.c.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The regular judiciary, patterned after the French system, has continued to function for most criminal and civil cases. Defendants traditionally receive a fair trial and are represented by counsel. In 1987 the Government began the practice of appointing civil service attorneys to represent those who do not wish to retain, or are unable to afford, a private attorney.

The people's revolutionary courts begun under Sankara continued to hear cases primarily involving public corruption. The president of each people's court is a magistrate appointed by the Government to head a tribunal composed of magistrates, military personnel, and members of the CR's. The court president asks questions directly of the defendant.

In December 1988, seven soldiers were convicted by a military court in Bobo Dioulasso. The trial was held in secret, and the seven were executed the day after conviction without an opportunity to appeal. In the 1989 case of the four persons summarily executed, there was no known trial.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

Government authorities generally do not interfere in the daily lives of ordinary citizens, and there is no general monitoring of private correspondence or telephones. Under the law, homes may be searched only under authority of a warrant issued by the attorney general. An exception exists, however, in national security cases, where a special law permits surveillance, searches, and monitoring of telephones and correspondence without a warrant. This law is used against persons suspected of opposition to the Government.

The Government encourages participation in the CR's and also in organizations being formed to support the Popular Front. However, it was still not clear in 1989 if lack of participation will result in dismissals from civil service positions, as was the case in previous regimes.

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

While there is no formal government censorship, the Government employs intimidating methods to limit freedom of speech and press. For example, repeated references by the regime to enemies of the State at home and abroad inhibit both government-employed journalists and ordinary citizens from expressing critical views. Similarly, it uses occasional dismissals from government service and arbitrary arrest to quash debate on political topics. In 1989 several persons were arrested and held briefly for distributing political leaflets.

Under the control of the Minister of Information, the media, which consists of a daily newspaper, a weekly magazine, a monthly magazine, and radio and television stations, are all government owned, and all journalists are civil servants. The media do not engage in serious criticism of the Government and

reflects government positions on both international and national issues. Journalists who try to report stories without political bias may be replaced for failing to support sufficiently the political views of the Government. In 1989 a private newspaper, L'Observateur, attempted to publish its first edition since it was burned down in 1984. The Government quickly cut off the electricity and stationed police at the doors, ostensibly because the newspaper did not have the proper permits. It subsequently made it clear that no permit will be granted. A small, private all-music radio station authorized to broadcast in the last days of the Sankara administration remains closed as well, after being shut down in the first days of the Compaore Government.

A new information code has been pending for more than a year. A number of proposed provisions involve insuring government control of any means of communication, publicly or privately owned, and government licensing of journalists. It would also institute prison terms or fines for violation of the code.

Foreign newspapers and magazines entered the country freely during 1989. For the most part, foreign journalists traveled freely and filed stories without censorship and enjoyed access to government officials. Films are subject to censorship by a review board which includes religious authorities as well as government officials. There were no known instances of political censorship of movies. There is no interference with international radio broadcasts.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

Under both the Sankara and Compaore Governments, political parties as such have been banned, and administrative permission is generally required for assemblies of any kind. However, in 1989 the Government permitted several small political groupings to meet more or less openly, with the more centrist groups invited to join the Government's popular front. Nonpolitical associations for business, religious, cultural, and other purposes exist and experience no difficulty in obtaining permission to meet or in associating with international bodies in their fields.

For a discussion of freedom of association as it applies to labor unions, see Section 6.a.

c. Freedom of Religion

Burkina Faso is a secular state, and there is no official discrimination on religious grounds. Islam and Christianity exist side by side, with about 40 percent of the population Muslim and about 15 percent Christian. The remainder of the population practices traditional African religions. Muslim and Christian holidays are recognized as national holidays. Social mobility and access to modern sector jobs are neither linked to, nor restricted by, religious affiliations.

d. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

Travelers within Burkina Faso are routinely stopped at police and military checkpoints. There appears to be little restriction on foreign travel for business and tourism. Exit permits, once used to limit movements of workers to neighboring countries, particularly to Cote d'Ivoire where 2 million or more Burkinabe continue to reside and work, are no longer required.

BURKINA FASO

Refugees are accepted freely in Burkina Faso, and attempts are made to provide for their care in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. There were approximately 270 refugees and displaced persons in Burkina Faso at the end of 1989, mainly from Chad.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

Citizens do not have the right to change their government through democratic procedures. The military have dominated the political process since 1980 through four changes in leadership. To bolster his popular front, President Compaore has taken some steps to create an opening to small conservative and centrist political forces, but he has not publicly indicated any movement toward a constitution, national elections, or political parties in the future. He relies on an amorphous grouping of people, including military officers, to help run the Government and has a loose network of Revolutionary Committees throughout the country to mobilize support.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

There were no known international investigations of Burkina in 1989. A new, local human rights organization, the Burkina Movement for Human Rights and Rights of Peoples (MBDHP), was formed, led publicly by the President, Administrative Chamber of the Superior Court. While the MBDHP has not directly publicly criticized the Government on specific human rights issues, after the September executions it publicly reaffirmed its opposition to the death penalty and the need in Burkina for fair public trials. Privately, it has brought a number of specific issues to the attention of the Government, such as the treatment of prisoners immediately after the September 1989 coup plot. Members were not harassed in 1989.

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Religion, Language, or Social Status

Minority ethnic groups are as likely to be represented in the inner circles of the Government as are the dominant Mossi, who comprise 50 percent of the population. Government decisions do not favor one ethnic group over another.

In the largely rural African society of Burkina Faso, women still occupy a subordinate position. Women supply much of the labor in family farming and are active in the market economy. The Government is committed to expanding opportunities for women, including in cabinet and civil service positions.

Women make up one-fourth of the government work force, which represents one-third of the total salaried work force in the country. Women make up approximately one-third of the total student population in the primary, secondary, and advanced school systems. While there is no known discrimination against women in the granting of scholarships for advanced study, schools in rural areas have disproportionately fewer girls than schools in urban areas.

Violence against women, expecially wife beating, occurs fairly frequently in the rural areas, less often in the urban areas. The Government is attempting through the National Women's

Association (UFB) to educate people on the subject. Specific cases can be brought to the UFB which attempts to offer protection and counsel. Such cases are sometimes brought before a "popular conciliation tribunal" for mediation. The Government also sponsors campaigns against female genital mutilation, which still occurs in many rural areas, although it is becoming less common in urban centers. Another form of multilation is by scarring the face of both boys and girls of certain ethnic groups, which is rapidly disappearing. The UFB also takes the leadership in these campaigns.

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

Workers have traditionally had the legal right to associate. There are a number of autonomous unions and five labor federations. Organized labor continues to be an important force in Burkina Faso. All unions jealously guard their limited independence from the Government. However, despite legal rights, the unions have been prevented from engaging in activities the Government opposes. Under the previous regime, many labor leaders were arrested and held for long periods. Some were reportedly tortured. One former trade union official was detained briefly in September 1989, allegedly in connection with a nonunion dispute.

Organized labor has the legal right to strike, but the Sankara government eliminated this right in practice. The Compaore Government has not faced major labor unrest, and its attitude has yet to be tested. There were several minor strikes in 1989. The International Labor Organization's (ILO) Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction in 1989 that all the teachers dismissed following a strike in 1989 had been reinstated, that sanctions against officials had been lifted, and that all political prisoners and admistrative detainees had been freed.

The largest federation, the National Organization of Free Trade Unions, is affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Another federation is affiliated with the World Confederation of Labor, and a third is affiliated with the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions. The other two federations are unaffiliated. The five federations take turns representing labor at the ILO meetings and participate in African regional labor meetings as well.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

Unions have the right to bargain for wages and other benefits within a specific bargaining unit, such as a company or factory, but cannot bargain industry-wide. They represent the interests of their members in the private and public sectors, as well as before the labor inspection service of the Government and before the courts.

There are no export processing zones in Burkina Faso.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

Forced labor is not employed and is prohibited by law.

BURKINA FASO

d. Minimum Age for Employment of Children

The labor code sets the minimum age for employment at 14, the average age for completion of basic secondary school. However, the Government lacks the means to enforce this provision adequately, even in the small-wage sector. Most children actually begin work at an earlier age owing to the large number of small, family subsistence farms and the traditional apprenticeship system.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

A minimum monthly wage of about $75 and a maximum workweek of 48 hours are stipulated by the labor code, as are safety and health provisions. This minumum wage is not adequate for a worker to support a family, and wage workers usually must rely on supplementing income through the extended family and subsistence agriculture. A system of government inspections and labor courts ensures that these provisions are applied in the small industrial and commercial sectors, but they have been impossible to enforce in the dominant subsistence agriculture sector which involves 90 percent of the population.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-fifth session
Item 35 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 23 April 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, and further to our previous letters concerning Israeli practices in Lebanon, I have the honour to inform you that on 9 April last, the Israeli occupation forces and the militias subordinate to them demolished the government elementary school in the village of At-Tiri in the occupied zone of southern Lebanon. The engineering unit attached to the militias evacuated 150 pupils from the school before blowing it up and causing a large conflagration which the Irish contingent of UNIFIL hastened to extinguish.

The Lebanese Government, which strongly condemns this Israeli act of aggression, calls the attention of international public opinion, as represented by the United Nations, to the fact that Israeli practices in breach of international law and custom, which are in defiance of the most elementary principles of human rights, have reached the extent of violating the basic right of village children to education.

Lebanon urges the international community to take speedy action to halt these inhuman Israeli practices.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 35 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Khalil MAKKAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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* A/45/50.

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General Assembly Security Council

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-fifth session
Items 23, 35 and 78 of the preliminary list*
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION
OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR
ASPECTS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 23 April 1990 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am instructed by the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has the powers and responsibilities of the Provisional Government of Palestine, to bring the following to your attention:

Israel, the occupying Power, persists in committing violations of its international legal obligations, particularly those contained in the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, which, inter alia, prohibits an occupying Power from deporting or transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. Israel, furthermore, persists in disregarding the obligations that it should accept and carry out decisions of the Security Council, particularly the Council's resolutions 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980.

The declared position of the current Government of Israel was made clear when Prime Minister Shamir affirmed the right of Jews to settle wherever they wished; Member of the Israeli Cabinet Ariel Sharon went beyond that and joined in committing such violations. Moreover, the Speaker of the Knesset, Dov Shilansky, congratulated the perpetrators of the latest of these violations and visited them in the illegally occupied premises in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem, between the Greek Convent of St. John and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

* A/45/50.

In addition to committing a violation of its international legal obligations, Israel committed a violation of the status quo on church property in Jerusalem. It is, further, reported that the funds used in the latest act of aggression were provided by a member of the Israeli Cabinet, Mr. Levy, who reached into the funds of the Keren Kayemet. Members of the international community, particularly members of the Security Council and more precisely the permanent members of the Council, are legally bound to ensure respect for the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and use all the powers vested in the Council to guarantee such respect and oblige Israel, the occupying Power, to abide by its international legal obligations.

On Wednesday, 11 April 1990, a group of Israelis moved into the building in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem. The building is the church property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. As expected, and in carrying out their duties and exercising their right, Palestinians demonstrated in protest against this aggression. His Beatitude Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros I led a procession from the church to the building and one of the monks in the procession removed a sign bearing the Star of David that was placed by the perpetrators of the aggression to cover the cross on the building. Radio Israel reported that the Israeli police stepped in and used force to disperse the procession and used gas. His Beatitude was assaulted and, as reported by radio Israel, "fell down and later mildly suffered from tear-gas inhalation; one of the crosses on his chest was broken".

In this context it is worth recalling the statement by His Beatitude Michael Sabah, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, in which he said: "If this process of appropriation of buildings continues, it would signify emptying the city of Christians. If I look at this affair from the point of view of the Palestinians, from their fate, I have to say there will be very strong, very violent reactions."

In pursuing its annexationist policies and practices and to divert attention from the facts and international legal obligations, Israel has decided to convert the situation to a procedural issue relative to the powers of magistrate courts and high courts.

I am instructed to request you to take immediate action and, if need be, concrete measures, to ensure respect for the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to reaffirm the illegality of such measures by Israel and to ensure the immediate evacuation of the said building, a church property. I am also instructed to warn against permitting the Security Council and the Secretary-General to become embroiled in procedural issues, ignoring the basic premise namely, that Israel is responsible for such violations and aggression and is obliged to respect its international legal obligations, and to respect and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 23, 35 and 78, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Zuhdi Labib TERZI
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations

UNITED
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General Assembly Security Council

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23 April 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-fifth session
Items 92, 104, 112 and 113
of the preliminary list*
EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUCH INSTRUMENTS
ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN
TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT
ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 23 April 1990 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have been instructed by my Government to draw your attention to the attached extract from Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1989, published by the Department of State of the United States of America, which contains information on the situation concerning human rights in Mali (including the persistence of the practice of slavery). I have underlined passages of special relevance.

In view of the importance of this information, I have the honour to request that the text of the present letter and the attached extract be issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 92, 104, 112 and 113 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Johanan BEIN
Ambassador
Acting Permanent Representative

* A/45/50.

ANNEX*

101st Congress
2d Session

JOINT COMMITTEE PRINT

COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES FOR 1989

REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AND THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
U.S. SENATE

BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 116(d) AND 502B(b) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961, AS AMENDED

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* Underlining has been added by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations.

MALI

Mali is a single-party state in which effective authority is exercised by General Moussa Traore, President of the Republic and Secretary General of the Democratic Union of the Malian people (UPDM), the country's only legal political party and supreme political entity. President Traore assumed power through a military coup in 1968, and under his leadership the military Government adopted a new Constitution in 1974. Since then, the military have retained a privileged position, but civilians have an increasingly important role in daily government operations and in the party. Military men continue to occupy 4 of the 7 regional governorships, 11 of the 46 districts, and an important number of lower level administrative posts, particularly in the border areas.

Mali maintains an army and air force, which provide both external and internal security. The gendarmerie (paramilitary police) assists in maintaining internal security.

With an annual per capita gross national product of approximately $190, Mali is among the world's poorest countries. Mali is landlocked and lacks major mineral resources. Its economy rests on subsistence farming and animal husbandry. Good rainfalls for the second year in a row increased agricultural production and permitted some export of grains. However, it is too soon to say whether the cycle of drought and economic depression that has affected Mali in recent decades is over. Malnutrition, poor food distribution systems, and widespread unemployment remain persistent problems. Throughout 1989 the Government continued its efforts to modernize the economy, particularly through fiscal reform and privatization of state enterprises, but Mali remains heavily dependent on external aid.

Human rights remained circumscribed in Mali in 1989. The Government did permit publication of an independent newspaper and the establishment of a nongovernmental human rights organization. The infamous Taodenit prison remained closed. However, security authorities mistreated several students and held them incommunicado for several months for distributing pamphlets. Significant human rights problems included arbitrary detention, abuse of detainees, and restrictions on fair trial, freedoms of speech, press, and association, the right of citizens to change their government through democratic means, and worker rights.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Political and Other Extrajudicial Killing

No politically motivated killings were reported.

b. Disappearance

No incidents of disappearance, abduction, or hostage-taking were reported.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Government has issued specific instructions prohibiting brutality against suspects. However, physical abuse of

suspected persons sometimes occurs during police interrogation or in confronting demonstrations. In 1989 authorities accused eight students of distributing political tracts and held them in incommunicado detention for 2 months. According to credible sources, they were seriously mistreated, and at least one of the students was tied and suspended by his hands for a prolonged period while undergoing interrogation. No officials were prosecuted or even reprimanded for these actions.

Prison conditions are harsh and characterized by inadequate medical facilities and food supplies. Mali's most infamous prison--Taodenit--was closed in 1988. In the past, the abysmal conditions at Taodenit contributed to the deaths of prisoners, including political prisoners held there. Amnesty International has called for a full and independent inquiry into the Taodenit deaths.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

The Malian judicial system is based on the French model. Detained persons do not have the right to a judicial determination of the legality of their detention, but arrests cannot be made without formal charges. In political cases, the authorities do not always follow this practice, and incommunicado detention is sometimes utilized, as in the case of the eight students. Malian law does not provide for release on bail, but detainees are sometimes released on their own recognizance. Administrative backlogs often cause delays in bringing people to trial. Detainees are usually allowed access to a lawyer of their choice.

With regard to forced or compulsory labor, see Section 6.c.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

A part of the executive branch, the judiciary is not independent. The Ministry of Justice supervises both law enforcement and judicial functions. The Supreme Court is the highest court, with both judicial and administrative powers. The National Assembly can convene a high court of justice to hear cases against state ministers, but this court did not meet during 1989.

The eight students mentioned above were finally charged in August under a statute prohibiting the distribution of politically inflammatory material. When their case came to trial, seven were acquitted, and the court suspended the sentence of the one student who was found guilty.

Corruption remains a major political issue, and trials against corrupt officials continued in 1989, notably in the Special Court of State Security, a military court. The Special Court met in June and heard 47 cases. Of the 72 persons found guilty of corruption, 30 were sentenced to life imprisonment and 7 received death sentences. In the Special Court, defendants usually admit guilt in the hope of receiving a more lenient sentence and allow their lawyers to argue mitigating circumstances. The verdict and sentence are rendered by a panel of three judges, including civilian judges and armed force officers. The death penalty is mandatory under the law for anyone convicted of embezzling more than $36,000. However, in most embezzlement trials restitution by the accused can decrease the severity of the sentence. Once convicted, a person can appeal for a presidential pardon or request a new trial. The right to request a presidential

pardon or a new trial exists in mandatory death penalty cases.

As far as is known, there were no political prisoners being held at the end of 1989.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

Inviolability of the home is provided for in the Constitution and generally respected in practice. Police searches are infrequent, and warrants are issued and recorded, though sometimes after the fact. Local authorities sometimes seize and open mail extralegally. Under the law, private letters can be opened only if the country is facing political crisis. In such cases, the only organization which may legally open personal mail is the "Securite d'Etat," a special intelligence service responsible to the Presidency.

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The Malian Constitution does not expressly provide for freedom of speech and press. Malians take care to express criticism of the Government in accepted forums. In theory, criticism is permitted within the councils of the sole political party, which all citizens are encouraged, but not forced, to join. Questioning of government authority outside party deliberations is rare, although not expressly forbidden.

The Government controls most Malian media, which reflect official positions. In some instances media and public criticism of specific programs and of the performance of some government officials is allowed. An independent biweekly newspaper, Les Echos, which often contains sharp political commentary, began publication in 1989. Independent specialty magazines such as Jamana (a cultural publication) and Podium (a sports journal) also contain some political commentary and circulate freely. International publications, including those having articles critical of Mali and its Government, are available. Satire and social criticism, sometimes with a political cast, are occasionally evident in Malian government publications. Government authorities generally seize political tracts printed by organizations not formally recognized by the Government.

Academic freedom does not include the right to criticize the Government, nor is this right extended to the only recognized labor union, which is considered an arm of the Government. The union has, however, occasionally been critical of government policy.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The Constitution provides for the right of citizens to form organizations to protect their professional interests, but in reality only selected nonpolitical organizations such as urban professional associations qualify. The primary groups which assemble freely are the women's, youth, and similar associations of Mali's single political party. In 1989 a number of apolitical "amicales" or friendship groups sponsoring exchanges with foreign countries were established, but these associations do not have an overt political agenda.

MALI

For a discussion of freedom of association as it applies to labor unions, see Section 6.a.

c. Freedom of Religion

Mali is a secular state. The Government generally does not discriminate on religious grounds. Although 90 percent of Malians are Muslim, most other religions may practice their faiths freely and are permitted to establish houses of worship as well as schools. Christian missionaries of various faiths enjoy government cooperation. Proselytizing and conversion are permitted, except in the case of the Baha'i, who may practice at home but may not proselytize or establish houses of worship. The Government prohibits publications in which one religious group defames another.

d. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

Freedom of movement in Mali is generally unimpeded, although police checks sometimes occur in which Malians and foreigners alike are stopped, particularly at night. These checks are used ostensibly to restrict the movement of contraband goods and to check vehicle registrations. In practice, some police probably supplement their frequently delayed salaries by assessing ad hoc fines or confiscating goods. Malians are free to change residence or workplace. Foreign travel requires an exit visa, which is easy to obtain. Repatriation is not restricted.

In the past drought years, Mali both accepted and generated displaced persons. Several thousand Malians were repatriated from Algeria in 1986 and 1987. In 1989 Mali agreed to accept additional repatriates from Algeria. Mali also permitted entry to a number of persons who were expelled from neighboring Mauritania.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

Citizens have no ability to change their government and only limited and infrequent opportunity to influence it. Important policies and decisions are made by a small group--the President, the 19-member Central Executive Bureau of the UDPM, and the Council of Ministers. The memberships of these groups overlap. The military role in governing Mali remains important, but civilian participation in the leadership groups has been growing. Party congresses are called by the President to consider special issues.

Within the one-party system, multiple candidates often contest party elections at the local level, but for National Assembly elections, which are held every 4 years, only one carefully selected party candidate runs for each seat. Proposed legislation is debated and endorsed in the National Assembly after its acceptance by the Council of Ministers and review by the Supreme Court. Party membership is a prerequisite for voting and for holding a civil service appointment or other government position. All citizens are encouraged to join for a nominal fee.

MALI

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The Government is generally responsive to inquiries by recognized human rights groups, although it apparently has not replied to Amnesty International's call for an inquiry into Taodenit prison. In 1989 the Government permitted the establishment of a nongovernmental human rights organization, The Malian Association for Human Rights. This organization sponsored a number of seminars on human rights issues in 1989 and is attempting to encourage Malian participation in international human rights meetings.

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Religion, Language, or Social Status

Mali does not practice religious or ethnic discrimination, nor does it have the civil and racial strife evident in many other multiethnic countries. Virtually all of Mali's ethnic groups are represented at the highest state and party levels. Although some nomadic groups such as the Tamashek are not completely integrated into the economic and political mainstream, Mali is relatively free of ethnic tensions.

Social and cultural factors place men in the dominant position in Mali. However, women play an important economic role, both in market life and in farming. There are a number of women in the professions, but economic opportunity for educated women is limited. Women live under harsh conditions, especially in the rural areas.

Violence against women, including wife beating, is accepted in Malian society, but there are no statistics to indicate how widespread it may be. Malian society generally does not tolerate spousal abuse that results in physical injury, but legal action for redress of injury is not normally available. The issue of spousal abuse has not been addressed by the Government. Nor is the National Union of Malian Women (UNFM) actively engaged in this issue. The UNFM focuses primarily on establishing cooperatives, improving health programs, and fostering education. It also campaigns against female circumcision, which is still widely practiced in Mali, including the most extreme form of genital mutilation, infibulation. The Government has taken no public position on this issue.

Traditional practice and existing Malian laws place women at a disadvantage with regard to family law and property rights. A group of female jurists is seeking improved legal protection for women. One issue being addressed by this group pertains to rights of widows. Currently, a widow has no right to her husband's property or custody of children conceived during the marriage.

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

The Constitution specifically provides for the liberty of citizens to form organizations to protect their "professional interests." However, workers' right of association is limited to the National Union of Malian Workers (UNTM). The UNTM

comprises 12 unions and is Mali's only recognized workers' organization. At present, there are no unions not affiliated with the UNTM. The UNTM claims to maintain a degree of autonomy from the Government, and unlike the women's and youth associations, it is not officially part of the party. It has on occasion offered limited criticism of certain government programs. Nevertheless, it is subject to considerable government influence and control, and the UNTM Secretary General is a party member, although not a member of the Central Executive Council of the UDPM.

Strikes are rarely permitted, and those deemed to be taken for political reasons are illegal. Given Mali's high level of unemployment, most workers are reluctant to strike for long periods of time. By law, any union planning to go on strike must notify the UNTM and obtain prior approval. In the case of student and teacher strikes which took place in 1988, no approval was given, but the strikes still took place and many participants suffered reprisals. The International Labor Organization's (ILO) Committee on Freedom of Association concluded that the resulting government-directed transfers, dismissals, and arrests of teachers constituted an infringement on their freedom of association. Malian teachers continue to have grievances, specifically over the nonpayment of salaries. There were no teacher strikes in 1989, but there were work slowdowns. In September drivers of minibuses in Bamako protested government attempts to impose stricter regulations on their activities. When there was no response to a complaint lodged through the transport union, drivers organized a 1-day protest strike. There were no government reprisals.

The UNTM maintains contacts with international labor organizations, both public and private. The UNTM is affiliated with two international labor bodies: the Organization of West African Workers and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

There are no specific constraints by the Government or employers on workers attempting to organize, but in practice, Mali's unitary party system effectively inhibits the workers' right to organize. True collective bargaining does not take place. The UNTM has a policy role in the agreements negotiated by the individual member unions, and the Government, through the Minister of Labor, must approve all wage and related agreements.

There are no export processing zones in Mali.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The Constitution prohibits forced or compulsory labor, and this prohibition is generally observed in practice. There have been reports that a form of traditional slavery is still practiced in some isolated parts of the country.

d. Minimum Age for Employment of Children

The minimum age for employment is 14, but with parents' permission children can be apprenticed at 12. In practice, children in rural areas join the family farming work force at a much younger age. As workers in the informal sector, they are not protected by laws against unjust compensation,

excessive hours, and capricious discharge.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

Mali has a detailed labor code specifying conditions of employment, including hours, wages, and social security benefits. The normal workweek is 44 hours. The minimum wage is approximately $42.50 per month, which could provide a decent standard of living if it went to support only one person. However, most wage earners support extended families. Health and safety standards vary, depending upon the category of work, but there is limited enforcement due to the lack of inspectors. Employers are required to pay into a national social security fund.